BBC

CHARLES DICKENS' WAR ON POVERTY

HISTORY MAGAZINE

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE

July 2020 / **www.historyextra.com**

HENRY VIII THE GREATEST SHOWMAN

How the Tudor king partied for peace at the Field of the Cloth of Gold

Why we forgot the Korean War

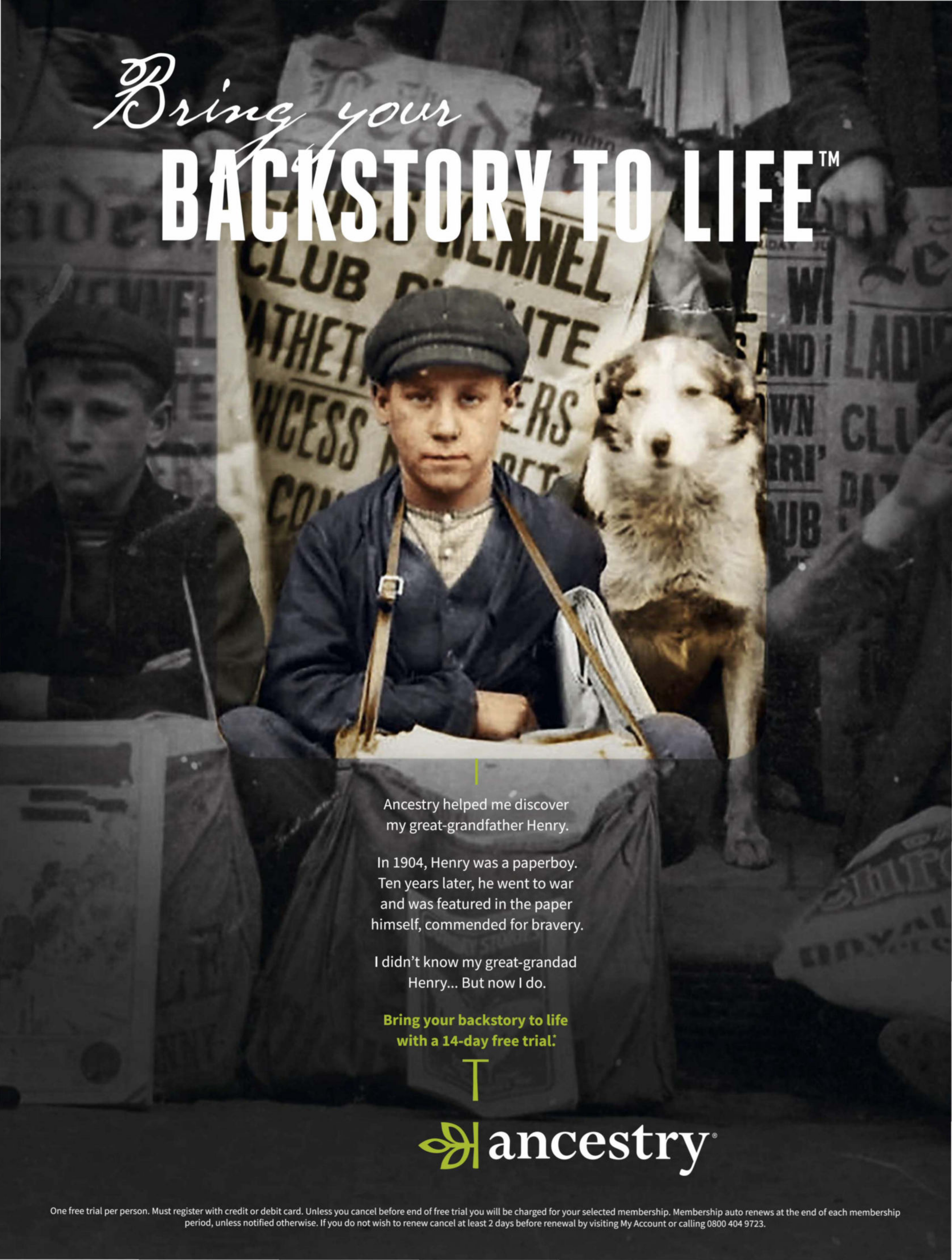
"His aircraft has exploded and he is sitting above Berlin"

Stories of WWII bomber crews

Who's holding the baby?

The challenges of childcare in the 20th century

Henry III in his own words: What made a medieval king tick?



Bring your
BACKSTORY TO LIFE™

Ancestry helped me discover
my great-grandfather Henry.

In 1904, Henry was a paperboy.
Ten years later, he went to war
and was featured in the paper
himself, commended for bravery.

I didn't know my great-grandad
Henry... But now I do.

**Bring your backstory to life
with a 14-day free trial.***

ancestry®

One free trial per person. Must register with credit or debit card. Unless you cancel before end of free trial you will be charged for your selected membership. Membership auto renews at the end of each membership period, unless notified otherwise. If you do not wish to renew cancel at least 2 days before renewal by visiting My Account or calling 0800 404 9723.

WELCOME

BBC
HISTORY
MAGAZINE

JULY 2020

“The historical milestones we mark each year are frequently connected to the wars that dominate popular history. In 2020, however, there’s been an outbreak of peace. May saw the **600th anniversary of Henry V’s Treaty of Troyes** and **75 years since VE Day**. And now we reach the 500th anniversary of the most magnificent peace of them all: the **Field of the Cloth of Gold**.

As Glenn Richardson reveals in this month’s cover feature, Henry VIII’s summit with French king Francis I was truly extraordinary, not just in the lavish feasting – where 30,000 fish were served – but also in the ways the kings sought to convert their warrior instincts into competitive diplomacy. Find out more on page 20.

With much of the UK in lockdown, and schools largely closed, many parents are struggling to balance the demands of work and childcare. This dilemma is, of course, nothing new and for women, who have traditionally been the primary caregivers, forging careers while raising a family has never been easy. On page 32, Helen McCarthy surveys the **challenges facing working mothers** over the past century.

Another impact of Covid-19 has been the postponement and cancellation of live events, including a few of our own. We’re seeking to revisit some of these in digital form, and we recently broadcast videos of the talks for our **Medieval Life and Death day**. Head to *historyextra.com/events/medieval-history-event* where you can watch all five lectures for free. I hope you enjoy them.

Rob Attar
Editor

THIS ISSUE’S CONTRIBUTORS

Grace Huxford
Modern conflicts reverberate all around the world, and often in the most unexpected places. This underpins my social historical research on the Korean War.
Grace explores the social history of the Korean War in Britain, on page 46

Glenn Richardson
The Field of the Cloth of Gold is an extraordinary event that has intrigued me for many years as a student of Renaissance monarchy. It offers us a unique insight into how kingship worked in the 16th century.
Glenn tells the remarkable story of the Field of the Cloth of Gold on page 20

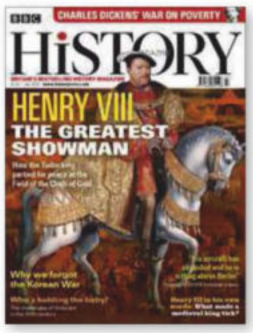
Helen McCarthy
As a professional historian and mother, I was fascinated to explore how women juggled wage-earning and childcare in the past, and to consider how much things have changed – or not.
Helen chronicles the huge challenges that have faced working mothers on page 32

MORE FROM US

historyextra.com

The website of *BBC History Magazine* is filled with exciting content on British and world history.

For more information on the **content in this issue**, go to **historyextra.com/july-2020**



The History Extra podcast

Download episodes for free from iTunes and other providers, or via **historyextra.com/podcast**

Our digital editions

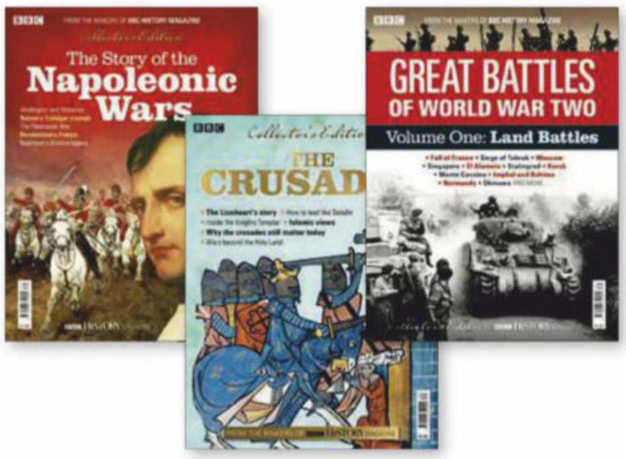
BBC History Magazine is available for the Kindle, Kindle Fire, iPad/iPhone, Google Play and Zinio. Find us in your app store or visit **historyextra.com/subscribe**

Facebook and Twitter

twitter.com/historyextra
facebook.com/historyextra

Our special editions

Discover our range of collector’s editions at **historyextra.com/special-editions**


The Story of the Napoleonic Wars
THE CRUSAD
GREAT BATTLES OF WORLD WAR TWO
Volume One: Land Battles

Contact us

PHONE Subscriptions & back issues
03330 162115 **Editorial** 0117 300 8699
EMAIL Subscriptions & back issues
bbchistory@buysubscriptions.com
Editorial historymagazine@historyextra.com
POST Subscriptions & back issues
BBC History Magazine, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BF. Basic annual subscription rates: UK: £48, Eire/Europe: £67, ROW: £69

In the **US/Canada** you can contact us at:
PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037
BHIcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com,
britsubs.com/history, Toll-free 800-342-3592

COVER IMAGES: COMPOSITE IMAGE OF HENRY VIII: 16TH-CENTURY PORTRAIT OF HENRY VIII BY JOOS VAN CLEVE, AND HENRY VIII ON HORSEBACK FROM A 19TH-CENTURY PAINTING OF THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD BY FRIEDRICH BOUTERWEK, BASED ON A 16TH-CENTURY ORIGINAL. BACKGROUND: THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD BY BOUTERWEK (ALL GETTY IMAGES). CHARLES DICKENS: GETTY IMAGES. THIS PAGE STEVE SAYERS/JONATHAN RING

CONTENTS

JULY 2020

FEATURES

20 Field of the Cloth of Gold
Glenn Richardson describes the pomp and pageantry on offer at Henry VIII and Francis I's 1520 peace summit

29 Cosmopolitan Chaucer
Marion Turner on the 14th-century poet's inventive, international life

32 Who's holding the baby?
Helen McCarthy traces the challenges that have faced working mothers since the turn of the 20th century

38 Henry III in his own words
David Carpenter on the inner world of the medieval king, gleaned from Henry's own correspondence

46 The forgotten Korean War
Grace Huxford explores the story of the 1950–53 conflict, and why it quickly faded from British consciousness

54 Dickens: social crusader
On the 150th anniversary of the novelist's death, Rosalind Crone highlights his battles for social justice

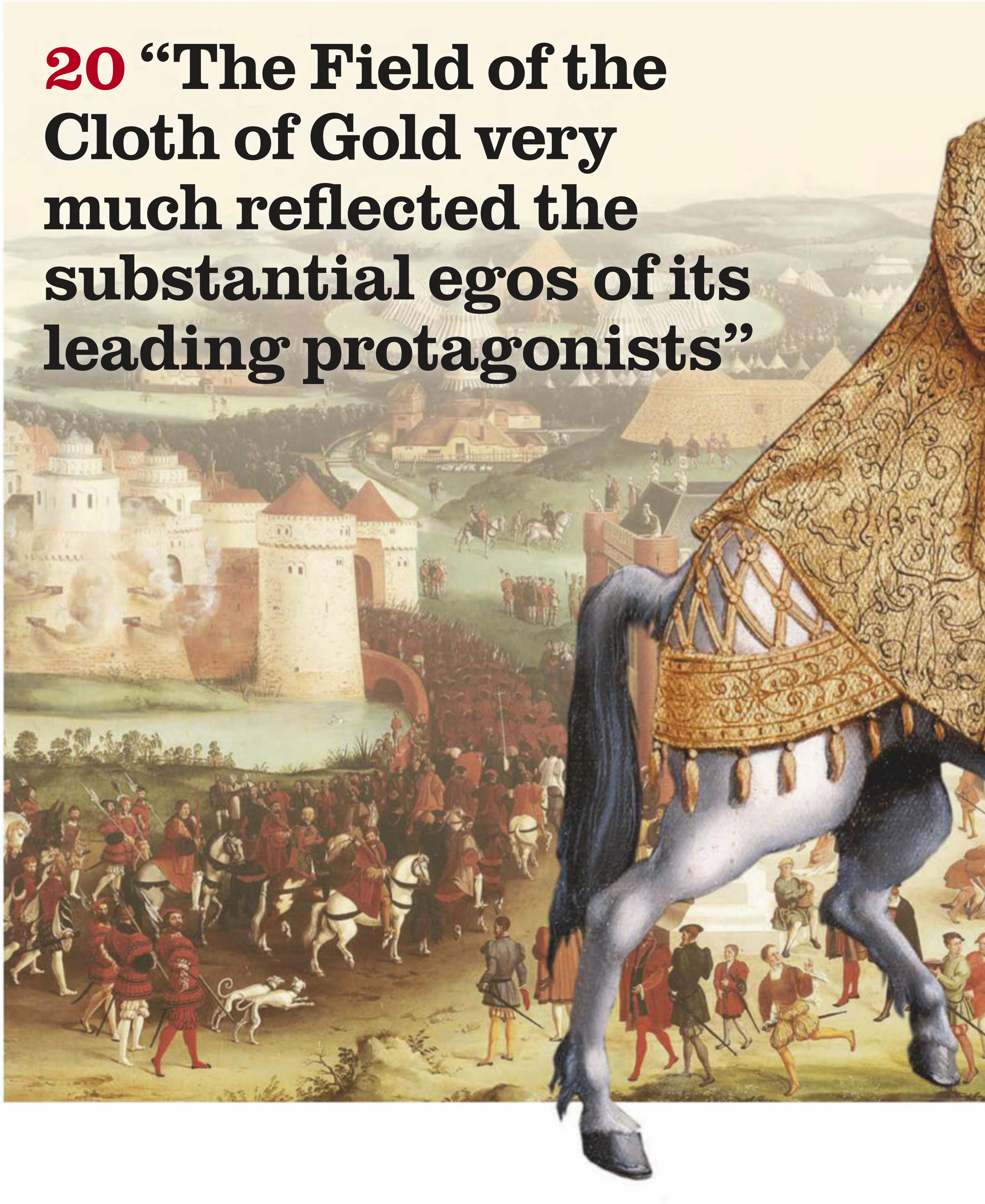
62 Composing Beethoven
Jessica Duchen charts the events that were instrumental in forging the classical composer's innovative talent

Author and former RAF officer John Nichol discusses his new book on the Lancaster Bomber on page 70

32 The **childcare conundrum** facing generations of women

38 Husband, humorist, home-bird: the multi-faceted **Henry III**

JOHN NICHOL/GETTY IMAGES/BRIGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES



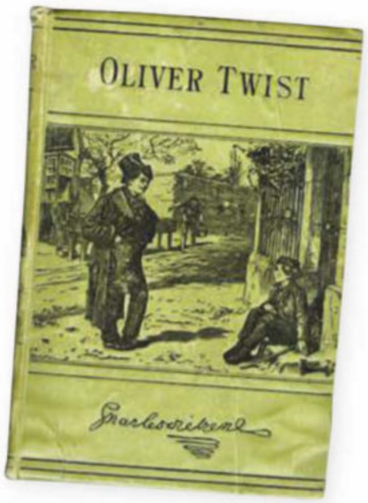
20 "The Field of the Cloth of Gold very much reflected the substantial egos of its leading protagonists"

62 The seismic events that inspired **Beethoven's radical genius**

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY/SHUTTERSTOCK

46 Why British anxiety about the **Korean War** turned to apathy

54 The real fights for justice behind **Charles Dickens'** fictional creations



29 Why **Geoffrey Chaucer** was more creative and cosmopolitan than his status as the 'father of English literature' suggests

EVERY MONTH

This month in history

7 **History news**
11 **Michael Wood** on how pandemics shape society
12 **Anniversaries**
16 **David Olusoga's Hidden Histories**

18 Letters

Books

70 **Interview:** John Nichol discusses his new book on the Lancaster Bomber – and the crews who fought and died in it during the Second World War
74 New history **books reviewed**

Encounters

80 **Diary:** What to watch and listen to this month
85 Our selection of **historical films** to stream right now

87 **Prize crossword**

90 **My history hero** Cathy Newman chooses Beatrice Shilling

44 Subscribe
Save when you subscribe today

20
HISTORY
HENRY VIII
THE GREATEST SHOWMAN

USPS Identification Statement BBC HISTORY (ISSN 1469-8552) (USPS 024-177) July 2020 is published 13 times a year under licence from BBC Studios by Immediate Media Co Bristol Ltd, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol BS1 4ST, UK. Distributed in the US by Circulation Specialists, Inc., 2 Corporate Drive, Suite 945, Shelton CT 06484-6238. Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495.

HEROES OF THE SKY
DECANTER SET

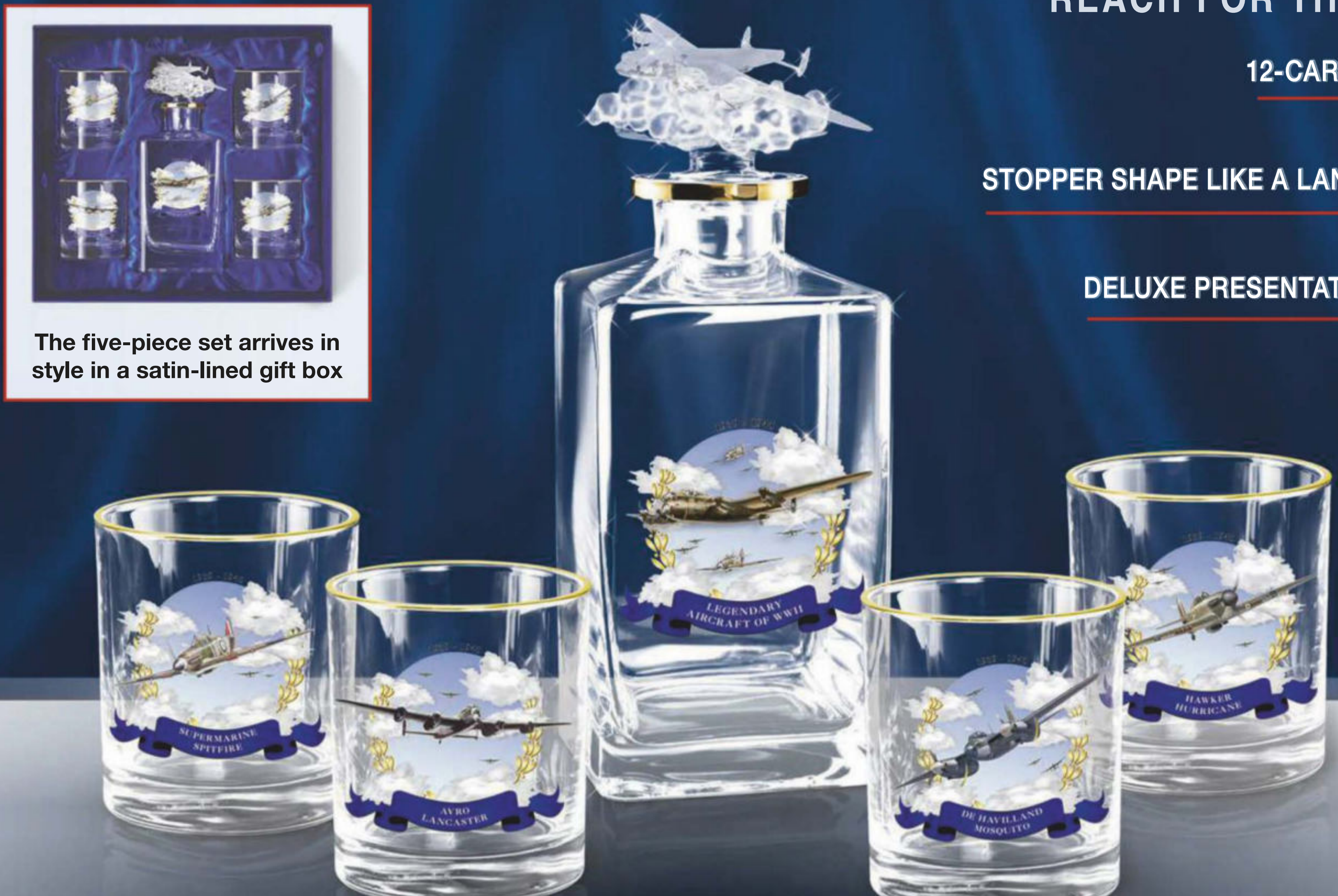
NOT AVAILABLE IN STORES

RAISE A GLASS AND
REACH FOR THE SKY

12-CARAT GOLD

STOPPER SHAPE LIKE A LANCASTER

DELUXE PRESENTATION BOX



The five-piece set arrives in style in a satin-lined gift box

PAY NOTHING NOW

ORDER FORM

Please Respond Promptly

To: The Bradford Exchange, PO Box 653, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4RA

YES! Please order __ (Qty) of the **'HEROES OF THE SKY' DECANTER SET** for me as described in this advertisement.

Complete today or Call 0333 003 0019

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)..
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address..

....

Postcode.......................... Telephone..........................

Mobile..

Email Address..

Applicants must be aged 18 or over. Please note, we may contact you via mail, email and mobile with information about your reservation. For details of our privacy policy, please go to www.bradford.co.uk/privacypolicy or contact us at the above address or phone number.

403-TAI02.01

Order Ref:382353

Protectors of freedom, the British aircraft of WWII secured peace for all. Now these iconic aircraft are celebrated in an exclusive barware set that captures their awesome might! Each of the four 295ml glasses is ringed in 12-carat gold and features stirring images of the aircraft in flight, paired with descriptive titles. A matching glass decanter bears an image of the Lancaster and features a fully sculpted Lancaster topper. Accented with 12-carat gold, it stylishly holds 740ml (25 fl.oz) of your favourite spirit. The set comes together in a distinctive cushioned gift box.

Exceptional value. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Strong demand is likely for this Bradford Exchange 5-piece set, accompanied by our 365-day money back-guarantee. Act now to acquire yours for 5 interest-free instalments of £29.99 – that's £149.95 (plus £9.99 S&S)*. Pay nothing now – simply complete and return your Priority Order Form today!

Lancaster-shaped stopper

© The Bradford Exchange. * S&S - Shipping & Service. Offer applies to UK only. A credit check may be carried out by a licensed Credit Reference Agency.Our guarantee is in addition to the rights provided to you by consumer protection regulations. 403-TAI02.01

FASTEST WAY TO ORDER

www.bradford.co.uk/wwiidecanterset

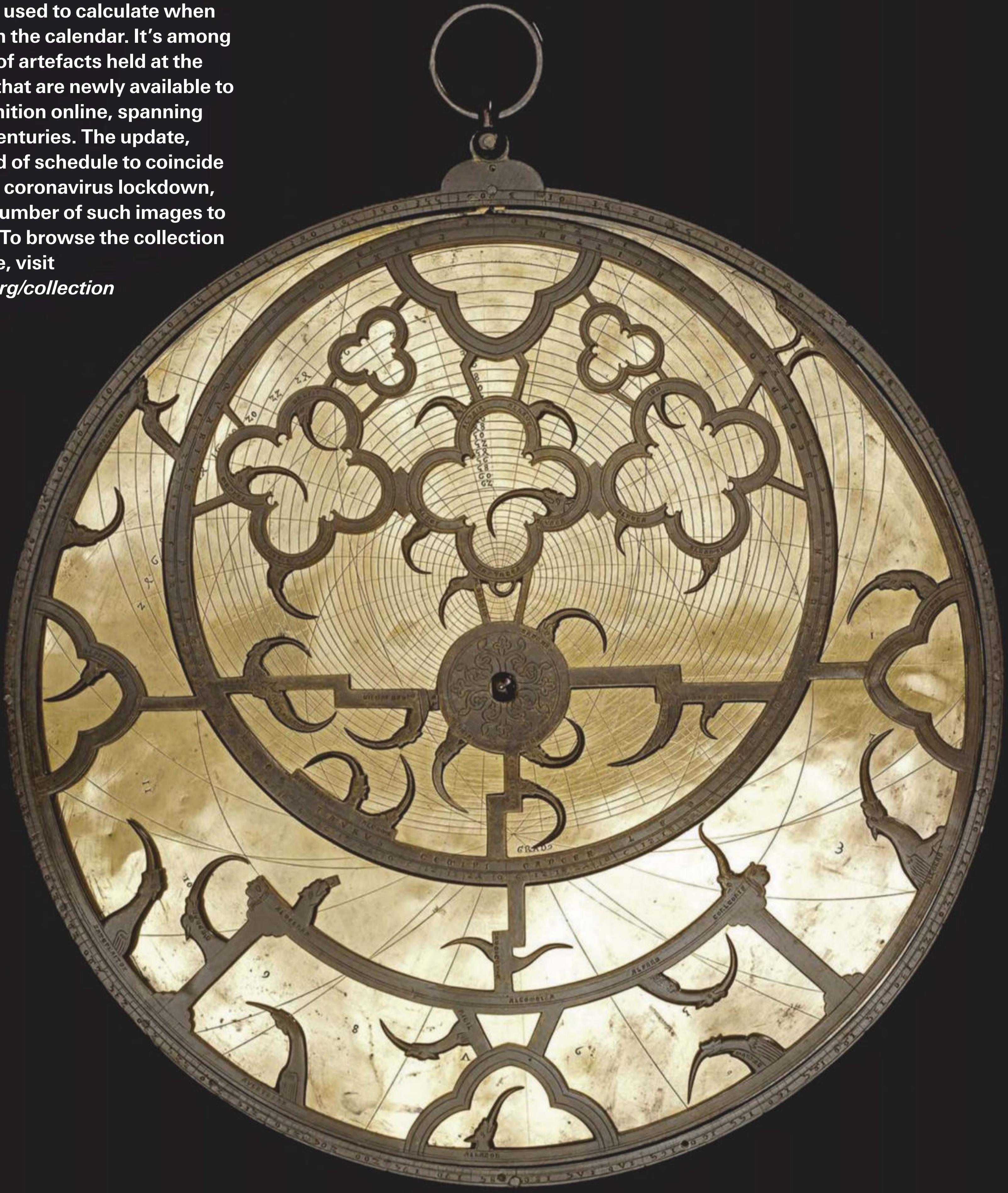
or call our 24hr hotline on **0333 003 0019**
and quote reference code 382353

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

EYE-OPENER

Days gone by

This striking bronze astrolabe was likely made in late 13th-century England, and would have been used to calculate when saints' days fell in the calendar. It's among 280,000 images of artefacts held at the British Museum that are newly available to view in high definition online, spanning continents and centuries. The update, announced ahead of schedule to coincide with the ongoing coronavirus lockdown, brings the total number of such images to almost 2 million. To browse the collection and find out more, visit *britishmuseum.org/collection*



TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Have a story? Please email Matt Elton at matt.elton@immediate.co.uk

TALKING POINTS

Lockdown lessons

As universities respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, academics and students have been discussing the future of higher education. **ANNA WHITELOCK** reflects on the conversations

Lockdown learning has dominated the lives of many over the past few months, with courses suddenly moved from lecture halls to the kitchens and living rooms of academics who were required to hastily tidy up – until they realised they could blur their video-chat backgrounds! It has been a learning experience for all. And, with a new academic year on the horizon, the prospect of how and where history teaching might be delivered has raised all kinds of questions, not least over the 'value' of online education.

One student, **Kayleigh Murray** (@kayleighmurray_), tweeted the view of many: "We pay £9.25k for an online course where access to campus and other facilities is just 'an added bonus'? I don't think so." The UK's minister of state for universities, **Michelle Donelan** (@michelledonelan), was at pains to make clear that "we only expect full tuition fees to be charged if online courses are of good quality, fit for purpose and help students progress towards their qualification. If unis want to charge full fees they will have to ensure the quality is there."

Her message did little to stem the twitter tide. As **Charlotte Riley** (@lottelydia) tweeted, "Students paying full fees for online teaching will put so much pressure on academics to deliver courses that weren't designed for online provision, without proper resources, or training or time." **Elaine Chalus** (@EHChalus) agreed: "The creation of fully online courses is more labour-intensive and resource-heavy as well as being pedagogically distinct from traditional university provision." **Katharine Reeve** (@kreeve) was more positive. "The Covid situation has been a real eye-opener in terms of new innovation in creating varied learning environments within modules, and lecturers raising their level of tech use in a very short space of time. This will be built on for the new academic year to benefit students," she wrote.

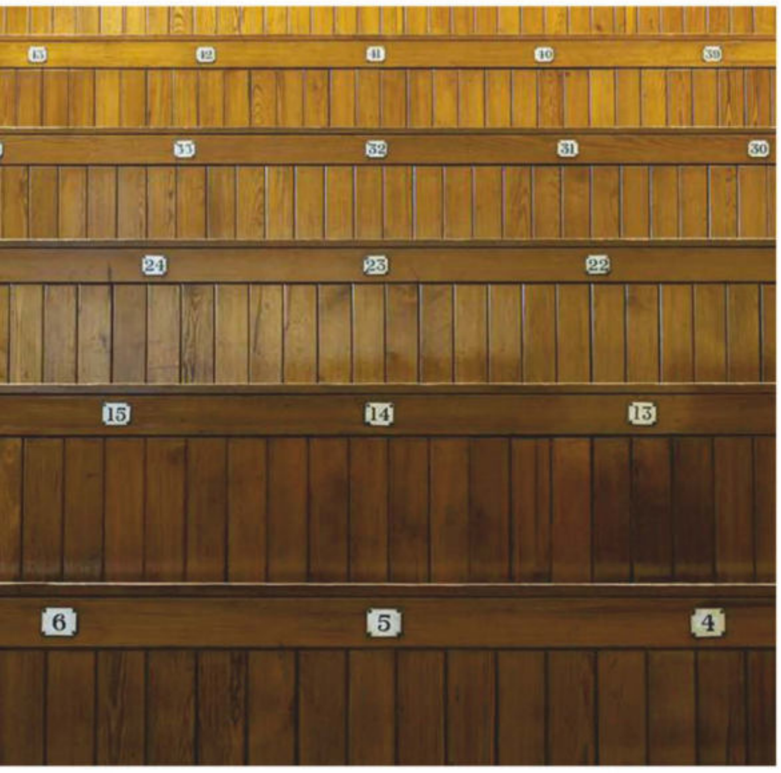
Join the debate at **twitter.com/historyextra**

Yet for **Jane T** (@JaneR46915034), as for so many prospective students, this makes little difference. As she put it: "This isn't what I signed up for when I [con]firmed my uni. It's nobody's fault, obviously, but I will not be going to uni this year with online classes. I will defer or take a gap year."

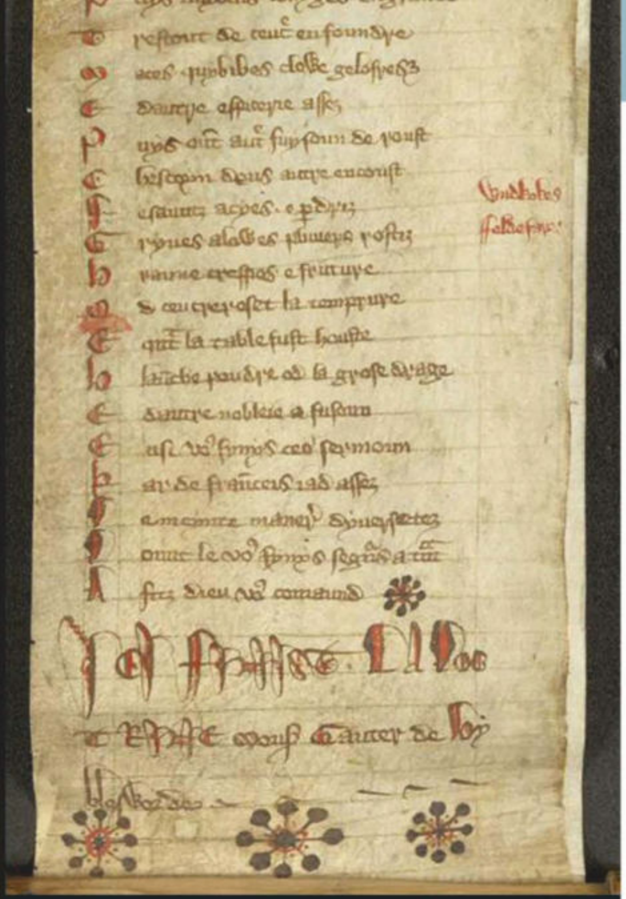
Necessity is the mother of invention but, perhaps in this case, not necessarily for the better. Certainly, as **Katharine Reeve** also tweeted: "Universities have achieved incredible change in the blink of an eye to see their graduating students through to the end of their degrees." This is no mean achievement. But it's fair to say that students and tutors are united in the view that online is not the ideal. Both groups want the experience of face-to-face teaching, learning and all that student life brings. H

Anna Whitelock is head of history at Royal Holloway, University of London

> We pay £9.25k for an online course where a campus is a bonus? I don't think so



An empty lecture theatre at the University of Manchester. Twitter users have been debating the pros and cons of online learning



The original version of the *Tretiz* was written by 13th-century knight and poet Walter of Bibbesworth

MIDDLE AGES

Textbook reveals role of medieval Franglais

The ways in which French continued to be spoken in medieval England at least 300 years after the Norman conquest are set to be explored in a new study.

The research, by a team from the University of Exeter, will examine the linguistic legacy of the 1066 Norman invasion across the following centuries. It's thought that, by 1300, as many as one in five people spoke both English and Anglo-French, with the latter becoming the language of court. This meant that it was deemed invaluable for professional success in fields as diverse as law, commerce and literature.

Key information about the use and spread of the language comes from the *Tretiz*, a 13th-century textbook created to help bilingual children brush up on their skills. Its rhyming couplets span topics from birth and childhood to household tasks and the names of plants and animals. It became popular with wealthy families, and 16 known manuscripts survive – allowing experts to compare how use of the language evolved geographically and across time.

"Each manuscript tells us about the experience of a community of language users," said Thomas Hinton from the University of Exeter. "Some copies seem to have belonged to noble households, while others were owned by clergy either for teaching or for their interest in its sophisticated wordplay. The popularity of the work shows that getting one's French right was considered important in a wide range of social sectors." H

BRITISH LIBRARY-BRIDGEMAN

HISTORY IN THE NEWS

A selection of the stories hitting the **history headlines**

Prague confirms graves misuse

Work to renovate Prague's tourist district has uncovered paving stones made from Jewish headstones, confirming suspicions that the nation's former communist regime looted graveyards for building materials. The practice took place at sites including the landmark Wenceslas Square, which was repaved in 1987 to coincide with a visit by then-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Thanks to a long campaign by Leo Pavlát, director of the city's Jewish Museum, the fragments will now be given to Prague's Old Jewish Cemetery.

Jewish headstones used as cobblestones by Prague's communist regime, which was hostile to religious institutions

Pompeii study suggests another Roman first: recycling

Before it was destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79, the city of Pompeii was characterised by its villas, amphitheatre and elegant squares. Just beyond its walls, however, lay a very different sight: piles of rubbish. Until now, researchers thought these mounds were cleared from the city after an earthquake in around AD 62. Yet a new study suggests that they are evidence of a systematic recycling scheme.

Project experts analysed soil samples to identify where garbage had been thrown away. Rubbish dumped in cesspits has left behind richer, more organic traces than the sandier soil from litter piled up outside of Pompeii's walls. This information allowed researchers to trace the journey of refuse around the city, revealing that some waste – including tiles and broken pots – was routinely collected outside of the city before being brought back in for resale and reuse.

Indeed, the same sandy soil from the rubbish piles was found within the walls of several buildings – suggesting that their cores were made of reused waste before being coated in a layer of plaster.

A street in the ancient city of Pompeii. Rubbish found near its walls may have been used in building work

Images hint at ancient henge

An armchair sleuth has discovered what could be a Neolithic structure in Derbyshire. Photographer Chris Seddon uploaded images of a nearby field to an online forum for amateur and professional archaeologists, and its members supported the theory that they hint at a circular, henge-like structure. With fieldwork paused due to the ongoing coronavirus lockdown, the case highlights the role that online resources can play in such finds – although experts stress that only excavations can offer definitive proof.

The site of the possible henge as viewed on Google Earth. Other Neolithic sites have been found nearby

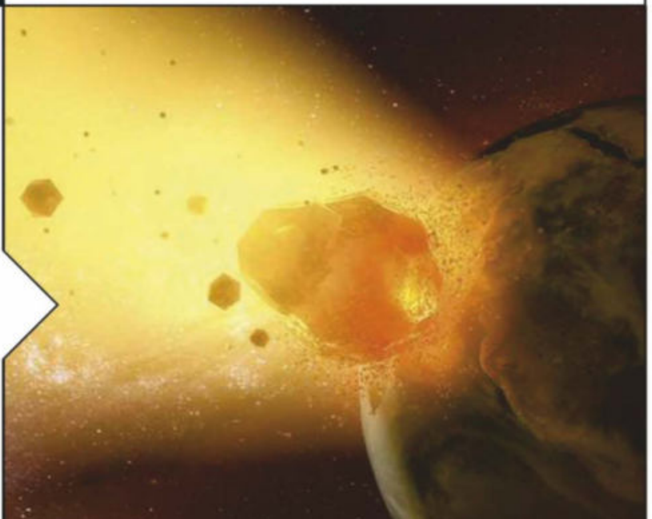
A chainmail link from the *Mary Rose*, which experts analysed using high-intensity 'beamline' X-rays

Scans yield Tudor armour clues

Analysis of chainmail worn by the crew of the *Mary Rose* has revealed that it was created using highly advanced techniques. Scientists from the University of Warwick discovered that three samples of armour found on board the ship, which sank in 1545 (see page 13 for more on this event), were made of precisely the same ratio of metals – 73 per cent copper and 27 per cent zinc. This indicates a high standard of production and quality control, and a skilful composition similar to that of modern brass alloys.

Letters 'prove meteorite death'

Documents uncovered in Turkey's state archives contain the first recorded evidence of a meteorite killing a human, researchers suggest. The fatal cosmic encounter took place on the evening of 22 August 1888 near an Ottoman village in what is now Iraq. Letters written by local authorities describe the inhabitants of a nearby city witnessing a fireball, before a shower of meteorite pieces fell "like rain". As well as the fatality, the impact left another man paralysed and crops in nearby fields badly damaged.



A rendering of a meteor hitting Earth. Such an impact may have killed a man in the 19th century

GUARDIAN-EYEVINE/GOOGLE MAPS/WARWICK UNIVERSITY/ALAMY

BBC FROM THE MAKERS OF **BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE**

GREAT BATTLES OF WORLD WAR TWO

Volume One: **Land Battles**

From north Africa to the Pacific, this first volume of a new three-part series explores the decisive ground campaigns that shaped WWII. Discover:

- Why Hitler's invasion of France was his biggest gamble
- How Montgomery masterminded victory at El Alamein
- The inside story behind the brutal battle of Okinawa
- Why the Germans were crushed at Stalingrad
- How the Allies liberated Normandy after D-Day
- The psychological effects of battlefield trauma on Allied and Axis soldiers

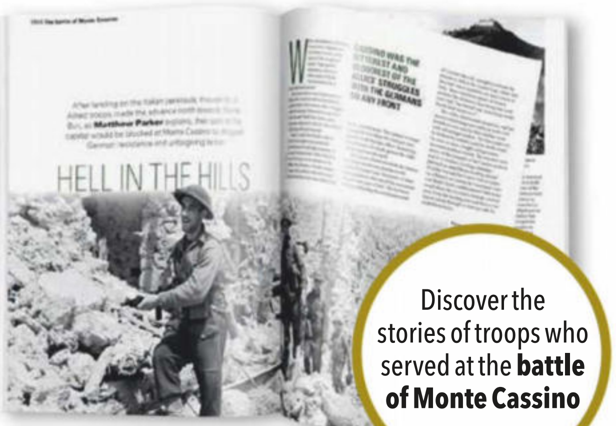
PLUS – receive FREE UK postage on this special edition!

BBC FROM THE MAKERS OF BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE
GREAT BATTLES OF WORLD WAR TWO
Volume One: Land Battles
• Fall of France • Siege of Tobruk • Moscow
• Singapore • El Alamein • Stalingrad • Kursk
• Monte Cassino • Imphal and Kohima
• Normandy • Okinawa AND MORE...
BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE
£9.99

ONLY **£9.99** INCLUDING **FREE P&P**

TOBRUK
SURVIVING THE SIEGE

Find out how the Allies survived desert life during the **siege of Tobruk**


HELL IN THE HILLS

Discover the stories of troops who served at the **battle of Monte Cassino**

TAKING BACK
THE PHILIPPINES

Learn about the struggle to **free the Philippines** from Japanese control

Order online **www.buysubscriptions.com/LandBattles**
or call us on **03330 162 138**+ and quote LAND BATTLES PRINT 1

+ UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am–5pm.
* Free delivery on UK orders only. Prices including postage are £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for the Rest of World.
All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.

MICHAEL WOOD ON…
THE BLACK DEATH

“Do pandemics change us for ever? Or does life just go on?”

I don’t normally like watching my own films, but the other day I caught up with an episode of *Story of England*, our series telling the tale of one village, Kibworth in Leicestershire, through history. As the story reached 1348, it became startlingly topical. Kibworth had the heaviest known losses from the Black Death of any English village, with two-thirds of its inhabitants dying. This set me musing about past pandemics. Do they change history? Do they change us? Or does life just go on?

Great pandemics, such as the Plague of Justinian in AD 541, were often preceded by extreme weather events and natural disasters – history warns us about the interrelationship between climate and plague. In Europe, the Black Death was preceded by a Little Ice Age, as well as the Great Famine of 1314–18, which killed around 10 per cent of England’s population. When the Black Death hit England, perhaps one half of the population died.

The village of Kibworth Harcourt was owned at that point by Merton College Oxford, which still keeps court rolls from the period. They show tenants trying to keep things going ‘as normal’: filling vacant tenancies, appointing new village officers, and looking after orphaned children too young to take up their parents’ field strips.

Among the dead was the vicar, John Sibil. As is the case with care workers today, his was a dangerous job, requiring him to tend to the dying, give the last rites, and organise help and care for vulnerable survivors.

People in the 14th century didn’t understand the nature of transmission of the *Yersinia pestis* bacterium from rat fleas to humans. Yet the fact they thought it was passed from human to human meant they likely practised social distancing. In one household, the ex-reeve Roger Polle survived together with his wife and all three sons – but of his extended family elsewhere in the village, his two brothers and two first cousins all died. Three of the family’s four branches were gone before the century ended.

The psychological impact was shattering: today we’d call it PTSD. “It was as if the world were at an end,” said one. Medieval people found the loss of loved ones, friends and neighbours, the constraints on burial and mourning, as agonising as we do. But what is most interesting is how Kibworth responded to the Black Death.

In its aftermath, two local farmers put a house and some land in trust to pay for a village guild with a chaplain to distribute charity, say masses for the souls of the dead, and teach the young. The chaplain was a local man, and his duties were different from those provided by the parish vicar appointed by Merton. The local people were, in effect, paying for someone to try to alleviate the psychological trauma and the economic fallout of the epidemic. They worked with them to remember their dead and distribute food to those in need – and to do so at a local level as an act of charity.

Over time, similar grants were made by other villagers, and in the 15th century the land they had gifted provided an endowment for a free school “for the godly purpose of the good bringing up of one’s own, and other men’s children”. Astonishingly, the land still provides support for students from Kibworth today.

In the economy and society as a whole, the long-term effects of the pandemic became apparent over the next few decades. This was a time of great economic hardship and social unrest, and fairness and social justice became big issues. In Kibworth Harcourt, prolonged disputes over labour dues and repair and maintenance resulted in a new deal with Merton in 1439. From now, land was not to be held ‘in bondage’ but by negotiated contract paid in cash. The losses caused by the pandemic had undermined the labour-intensive feudal order, and accelerated the shift to a money economy – the local roots of capitalism.

The lessons of the Black Death in Kibworth, then, are that life went on, and that people rebuilt the economy on which they depended. But no one forgot there that everything rested on communal cooperation, kindness and solidarity. It was no accident that in the aftermath, in nearby Lutterworth, John Wycliffe composed his vernacular version of the New Testament, including one of the most enduring passages in the English language: “Now dwellen feith, hope, and charite, these thre; but the most of these is charite.” H

Michael Wood is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. He has presented numerous BBC series, and his books include *The Story of England* (Viking, 2010)

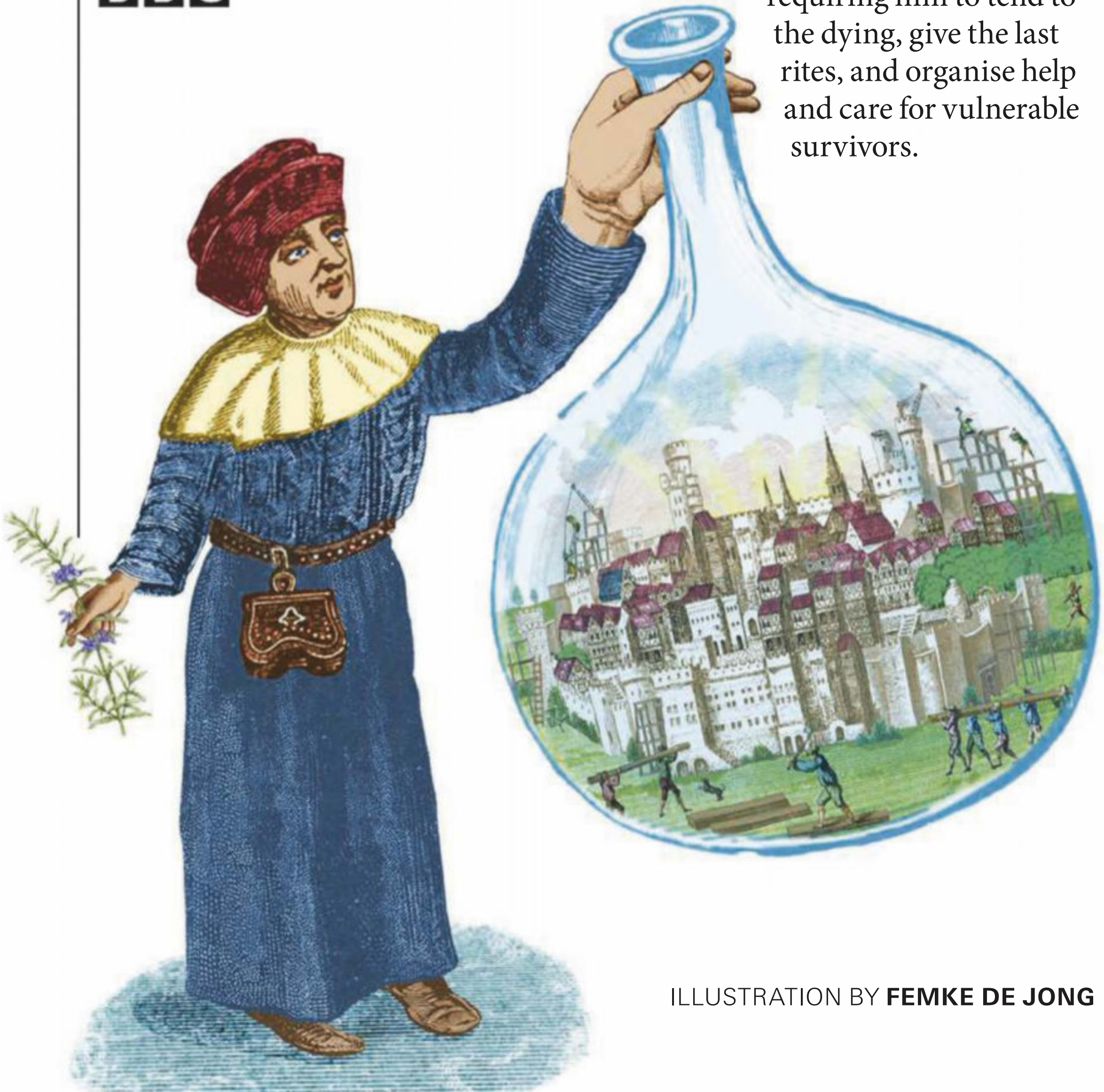


ILLUSTRATION BY **FEMKE DE JONG**

ANNIVERSARIES

DOMINIC SANDBROOK highlights events that took place in July in history

11 JULY 1960

Harper Lee exposes southern racism

The author publishes her debut novel, To Kill a Mockingbird

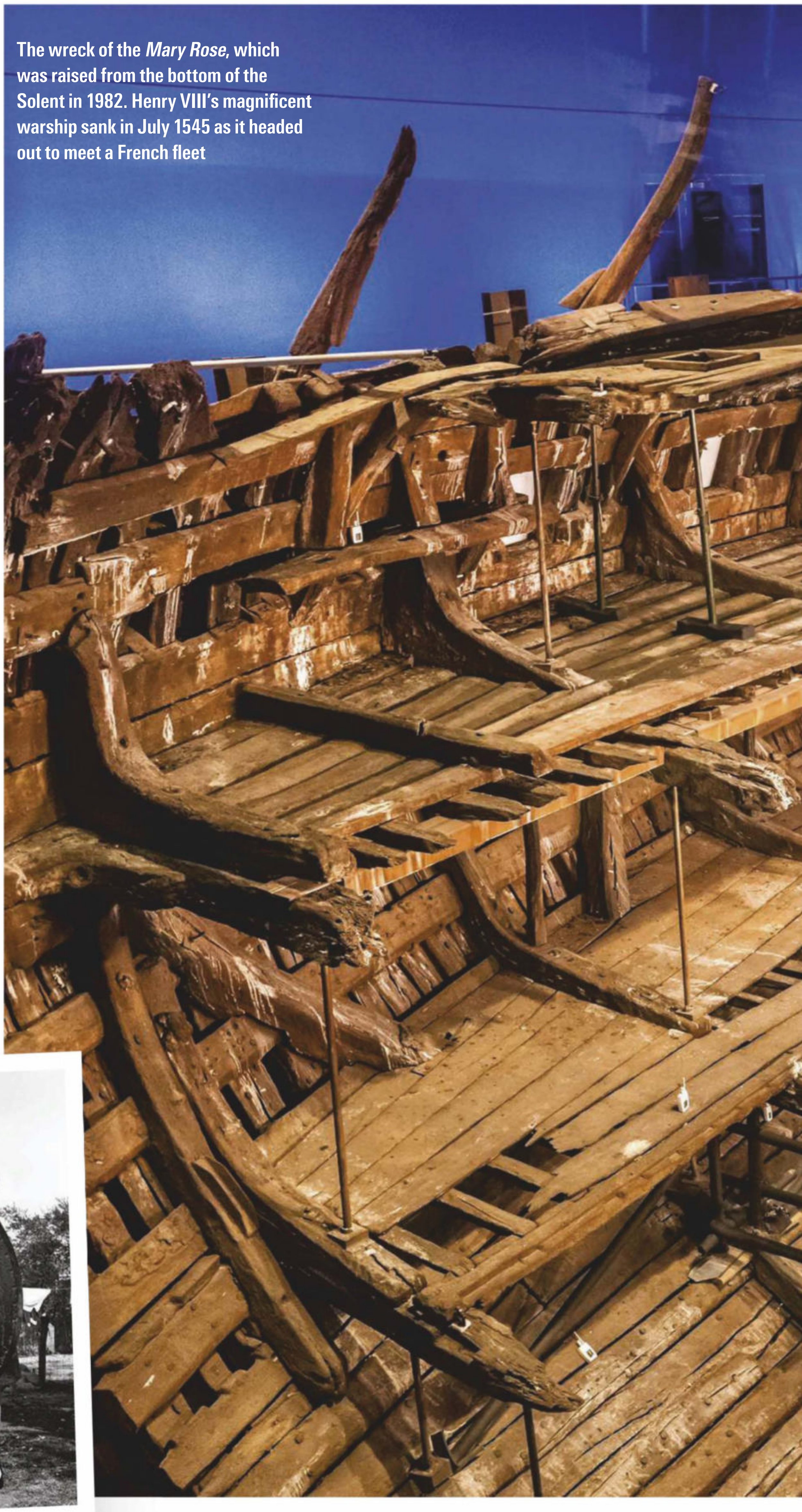
It was the summer of 1960, and Harper Lee was worried. After quitting her job, she had finished her first book, which she wanted to call *Go Set a Watchman*. But her publishers, JB Lippincott, persuaded her to change the title. They settled on *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The publication date was set for 11 July: a sweet moment for a debut novelist. But Lee's editor warned her not to expect too much. At best, it would likely sell only a few thousand copies.

Lee had been working for years on her story of racial injustice in a small southern town. But as the big day approached, she felt a surge of anxiety. "I never expected any sort of success with *Mockingbird*," she said later. "I was hoping for a quick and merciful death at the hands of the reviewers."

When the day came, not everybody was bowled over. The novel, said the *Atlantic Monthly*, was merely "pleasant, undemanding" reading. But with the southern civil rights movement making headlines day after day, it could hardly have been better timed. Its moralistic message was perfectly crafted to win over middle-class readers. And when both the *Readers' Digest* and the Book of the Month Club gave it their seal of approval, *Mockingbird's* success was guaranteed.

By the time the Hollywood adaptation appeared in 1962, Lee was a household name, feted as the writer who, perhaps more than any other, had persuaded white Middle America to face the harsh reality of racial prejudice.

Harper Lee (standing) on the set of the 1962 film adaptation of her bestselling debut book



The wreck of the *Mary Rose*, which was raised from the bottom of the Solent in 1982. Henry VIII's magnificent warship sank in July 1545 as it headed out to meet a French fleet

BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY

27 JULY 1549

The Spanish Jesuit monk Francis Xavier is **the first Christian missionary to reach Japan**, although local suspicion forces him to wait for weeks before being allowed ashore.

19 JULY 1545

Henry VIII's warship sinks in the Solent

The Mary Rose capsizes

The sinking of the *Mary Rose* remains one of history's great nautical mysteries. Why did a royal warship, which had been perfectly seaworthy for a quarter of a century, suddenly sink to the bottom of the English Channel, apparently untouched by enemy fire?

What made it worse was the context. Henry VIII was at war with France, and an enemy fleet, almost twice the size of the later Spanish Armada, had sailed into the river Solent. But the king was confident of victory. On the night of 18 July 1545, he dined aboard his flagship, the *Great Harry*, and confirmed that the experienced Sir George Carew would be in charge of the *Mary Rose* the next day.

On the morning of 19 July, Henry and his courtiers stepped onto the battlements of Southsea Castle, looking forward to a glorious martial spectacle. Unfortunately, a lack of wind meant that the English ships could not venture out until the afternoon. When the moment finally came they were a magnificent sight, their pennants fluttering in the breeze. And then disaster struck.

What happened next remains unclear. The *Mary Rose* had fired its starboard guns and was coming about to fire from the port side. Then a gust of wind ruffled the waters – and suddenly something went terribly wrong. The ship was leaning too far to its starboard side. It seemed unsteady, tipped, and began to sink.

In the chaos, much of the *Mary Rose*'s equipment had come loose, including its colossal oven, copper cauldron and heavy guns. Men were scrambling and screaming in terror, but the companionways had become bottlenecks, crowded with contorted bodies. For many, capsizing meant almost certain death, because they could not swim. But what made matters far worse was that the ship was covered with anti-boarding netting, which kept the men trapped aboard, unable to leap off.

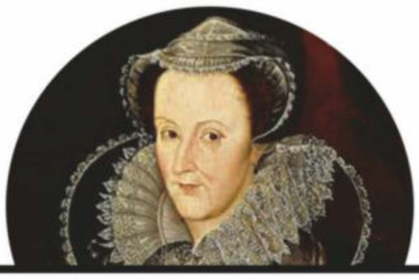
At least 450 men died that afternoon. It was one of the greatest naval tragedies in English history – and Henry had watched it all.

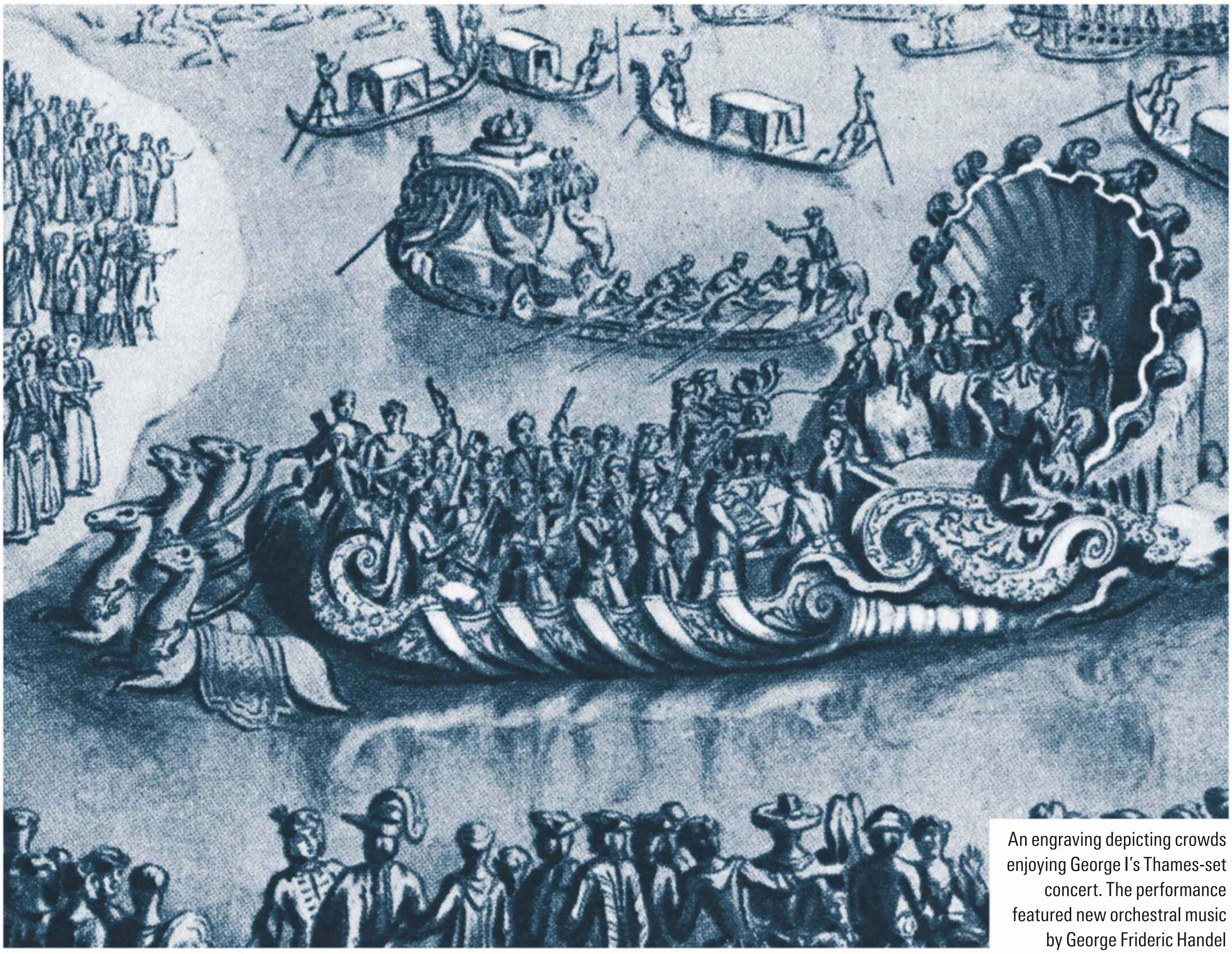
14 JULY 1865

Led by the young artist Edward Whymper, a British mountaineering party to the Alps becomes **the first team ever to scale the Matterhorn** – although four of the party are killed on the way back down.

24 JULY 1567

Having been imprisoned by her rebellious nobles in Loch Leven Castle, **Mary, Queen of Scots is forced to abdicate** in favour of her one-year-old son, who becomes James VI.





An engraving depicting crowds enjoying George I's Thames-set concert. The performance featured new orchestral music by George Frideric Handel

17 JULY 1717

Handel's *Water Music* makes its royal premiere

George I throws a Thames party featuring a classical soundtrack

Almost three years after George I had succeeded to the British throne, the Elector of Hanover was not exactly the most popular man in the country. With his thick accent, he still struck most people as irredeemably German. To compound matters, his son seemed determined to eclipse him, pointedly throwing huge parties that left his father looking soul-numbingly boring. What was a king to do?

The answer was a theatrical spectacular that still resonates down the ages. On the evening of 17 July, the monarch boarded an open barge at Whitehall and set off up the Thames towards Chelsea. The first British daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, takes up the story:

"Many other Barges with Persons of Quality attended, and so great a Number of Boats, that the whole River in a manner was cover'd; a City Company's Barge was employ'd for the Musick, wherein were 50 instruments of all sorts, who play'd all the way from Lambeth the finest Symphonies, compos'd express for this Occasion, by Mr Hendel; which his Majesty liked so well, that he caus'd it to be plaid over three times in going and returning".

'Mr Hendel' was, of course, the great George Frideric Handel, who had once worked for George in Hanover. Some said the future king had been offended by Handel's lucrative move to London, but the *Water Music* was the perfect way to rebuild their relationship. The banks of the Thames were packed with sightseers; many people declared they had heard nothing like it.

The king was clearly delighted with Handel's efforts, and the party went on well into the night. "At Eleven his Majesty went a-shore at Chelsea where a Supper was prepar'd," said the *Courant*, "and then there was another very fine Concert of Musick, which lasted till two; after which, his Majesty came again into his Barge, and return'd the same Way, the Musick continuing to play until he landed".

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

A c19th-century badge commemorating the clash at Shrewsbury. It shows Henry V, who fought in the battle as a 16-year-old alongside his father, Henry IV

21 JULY 1403

Henry IV sees off rebel forces

The battle of Shrewsbury leaves the king triumphant

Henry Bolingbroke had been king of England for less than four years when he faced his greatest challenge. In the autumn of 1399 he had deposed his cousin, Richard II, to become Henry IV. But by the summer of 1403, rebellion had broken out in Wales – and the Percy family, who dominated northern England, had turned against him too. Everything seemed to be going wrong at once.

On the morning of 21 July, Henry's army caught up with the Percys outside Shrewsbury. Peace talks came to nothing, however, and late that afternoon, the king raised his sword to launch the attack. Now, more than ever, it seemed that fate was against him. The Percys' Cheshire bowmen were deadly shots, and as their arrows rained down, Henry's men "fell like leaves in autumn".

Then the feared Henry Percy, nicknamed 'Hotspur', charged at the king himself. The royal standard fell, its bearer hacked to the ground. Word swept across the battlefield: King Henry was dead. "Henry Percy king!" yelled the northern troops. A moment later, however, another cry went up. It was the king. "Henry Percy dead!" he cried. It was true. Hotspur had fallen, apparently after being shot in the face – but Henry IV was very much alive.

Dusk fell and the slaughter petered out. As was the case with many medieval battles, Shrewsbury had been a chaotic, bloody mess. None of the participants would ever have imagined that, thanks to William Shakespeare and Sir John Falstaff, it would inspire one of the greatest comedies in the English language. H

Dominic Sandbrook is a historian. His latest book is *Who Dares Wins: Britain, 1979–1982* (Allen Lane, 2019)

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Rosalind Franklin's pioneering scientific career

BY **PATRICIA FARA**

One hundred years ago, on 25 July 1920, Britain's most famous female scientist, Rosalind Franklin, was born. 2020 seems a particularly appropriate moment to celebrate her life. Just 37 years old when she died, Franklin carried out pioneering research into viruses and made crucial contributions to gas masks – a kind of wartime PPE. But she is best known for a relatively brief period during which she investigated DNA, the double helix molecule carrying our genetic code. The controversies surrounding her misogynistic treatment by US scientist James Watson have overshadowed her other achievements, and Franklin has become mythologised as the helpless victim of male prejudice.

Franklin's difficulties began in 1950, when she returned to England after three successful years in a Parisian laboratory, where she became an expert in X-ray crystallography – a sophisticated method for exploring how atoms are arranged inside large molecules. Accepting the offer of a research fellowship at King's College London, she was assigned to work on DNA – but so too was Maurice Wilkins. Unfortunately, their boss neglected to clarify the official relationship between them, a failure that led to great bitterness and rivalry.

> **"** Controversies surrounding Franklin's misogynistic treatment have overshadowed her achievements **"**

Determined to escape the hostile environment at King's, Franklin secured a prestigious position elsewhere, but conscientiously worked out her contract. She discovered that DNA molecules can take two different forms, which she labelled A and B. While Wilkins took over B, she focused on the more problematic 'A' variety. Working under her direction, her assistant Ray Gosling took a series of X-ray photos, including the crucial number 51. Technically tricky to obtain, it looks like a simple cross but reveals a hidden spiral.

Franklin as seen in a 1956 photo. Her work was central to scientific understanding of DNA

Unknown to Franklin, Wilkins showed photograph 51 to Watson, who immediately grasped its significance. Dashing back to Cambridge, he used her image to construct a double helix model with his collaborator Francis Crick. Their joint paper in *Nature* has achieved iconic status, but they supplied no supporting experimental evidence beyond photograph 51.

Franklin died in 1958, just four years before a Nobel Prize was jointly awarded to Crick, Watson and Wilkins. Then, in 1968, accusations of unethical behaviour proliferated when Watson published his romanticised autobiographical account, *The Double Helix*. Critics deplored his portrayal of science as a competitive race rather than a cooperative venture, but they were even more antagonised by his denigration of Franklin – Rosy, as he patronisingly called her – as a freakish, unattractive woman. His insulting condescension converted her into a worldwide *cause celebre* – but for reasons that she would have abhorred. H

Patricia Fara is an emeritus fellow of Clare College, Cambridge. Her most recent book is *A Lab of One's Own: Science and Suffrage in the First World War* (OUP, 2018)

HIDDEN HISTORIES

DAVID OLUSOGA explores lesser-known stories from our past

"Garibaldi was feted by our Victorian ancestors in an unprecedented way"

It's not at all surprising that Giuseppe Garibaldi is a national hero in his native Italy. Arguably the pre-eminent figure in the struggle to unify the Italian peninsula, his statue is everywhere and most Italian towns and villages seem to have at least one street or square named after him. What is more unexpected is that Garibaldi was also regarded as a hero here in Britain. In the middle decades of the 19th century, he was feted and lionised by our Victorian ancestors in a way and to an extent that was arguably unprecedented.

The relics of Britain's Garibaldi craze can still be found today. On a street corner in the centre of Newcastle, for example, is a plaque marking his 1854 visit to the city. The shelves and display cabinets of numerous museums and private collections feature Staffordshire pottery figurines of Garibaldi in heroic poses, which were produced in their thousands.

A brilliant military commander, Garibaldi won battles across Italy in the cause of unification, and did so in the gaze of a European press that was booming in response to growing literacy. Yet the sheer scale of his celebrity stemmed from more than his military exploits: it was furthered by his windswept and romantic image. If you set out to design a romantic revolutionary hero from scratch, you would probably come up with something similar to General Giuseppe Garibaldi. The closest figure the 20th century had to him was perhaps Che Guevara.

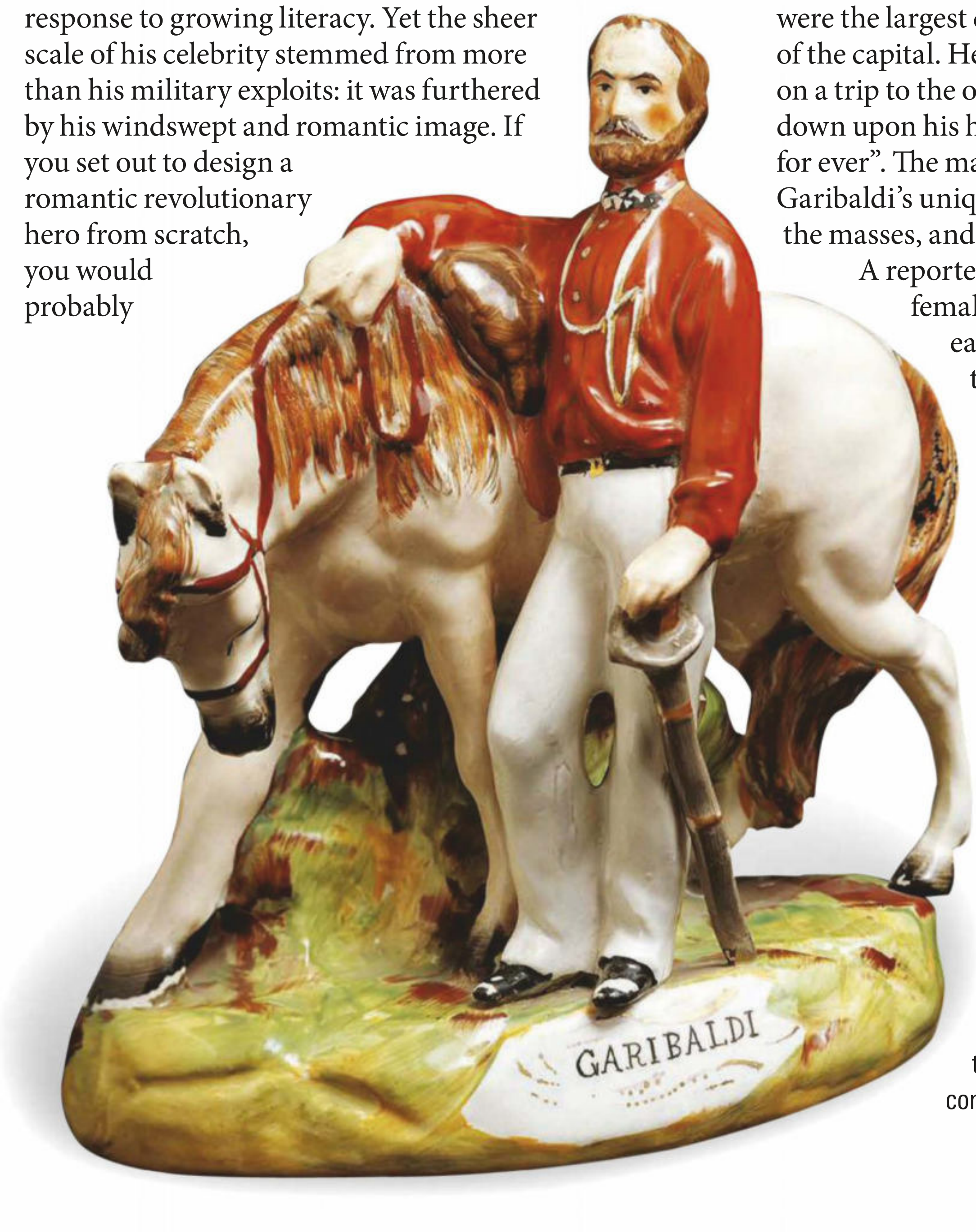
From the 1850s onward, what we would now call a 'personal brand' developed around Garibaldi. Having served in military campaigns in Europe, he was exiled in South America, where he became known as the 'hero of the two worlds' – the old and the new.

It was during his time in South America that Garibaldi acquired a distinctive personal style. As well as tasselled hats, he famously wore loose-fitting red shirts, later adopted by the volunteers from across Italy and throughout Europe who flocked to fight under him. Influenced by the fashions of the South American *gaucho*, these red shirts marked Garibaldi out as a uniquely dashing figure. They became an item of popular fashion for women, and Nottingham Forest football club – established in the 1860s just after Garibaldi had visited the city – chose 'Garibaldi Red' as its team colour.

The apex of the Victorian cult of Garibaldi came during his 1864 visit to Britain. In London, half a million people were estimated to have gathered in the hope of catching a glimpse of him. Some historians believe these were the largest crowds that had ever taken to the streets of the capital. He was honoured with a 15-gun salute, and on a trip to the opera at Covent Garden flowers rained down upon his head and huge crowds chanted "Garibaldi for ever". The make-up of those crowds was testimony to Garibaldi's unique ability to appeal to both the elites and the masses, and be as popular with women as with men.

A reporter from *The Guardian* noted that "the female portion of those present were even more eager than their male companions to reach Garibaldi, and, if they could not shake hands with him, at least to touch the grey cloak he wore".

Remarkably, though, perhaps the most enduring legacy of the incredible celebrity that Garibaldi achieved in Victorian Britain is not a statue or a heritage plaque but a biscuit. The Garibaldi biscuit was invented in London in 1861, the year that the man himself achieved his lifetime ambition – leading his army to victory and unifying a nation. H

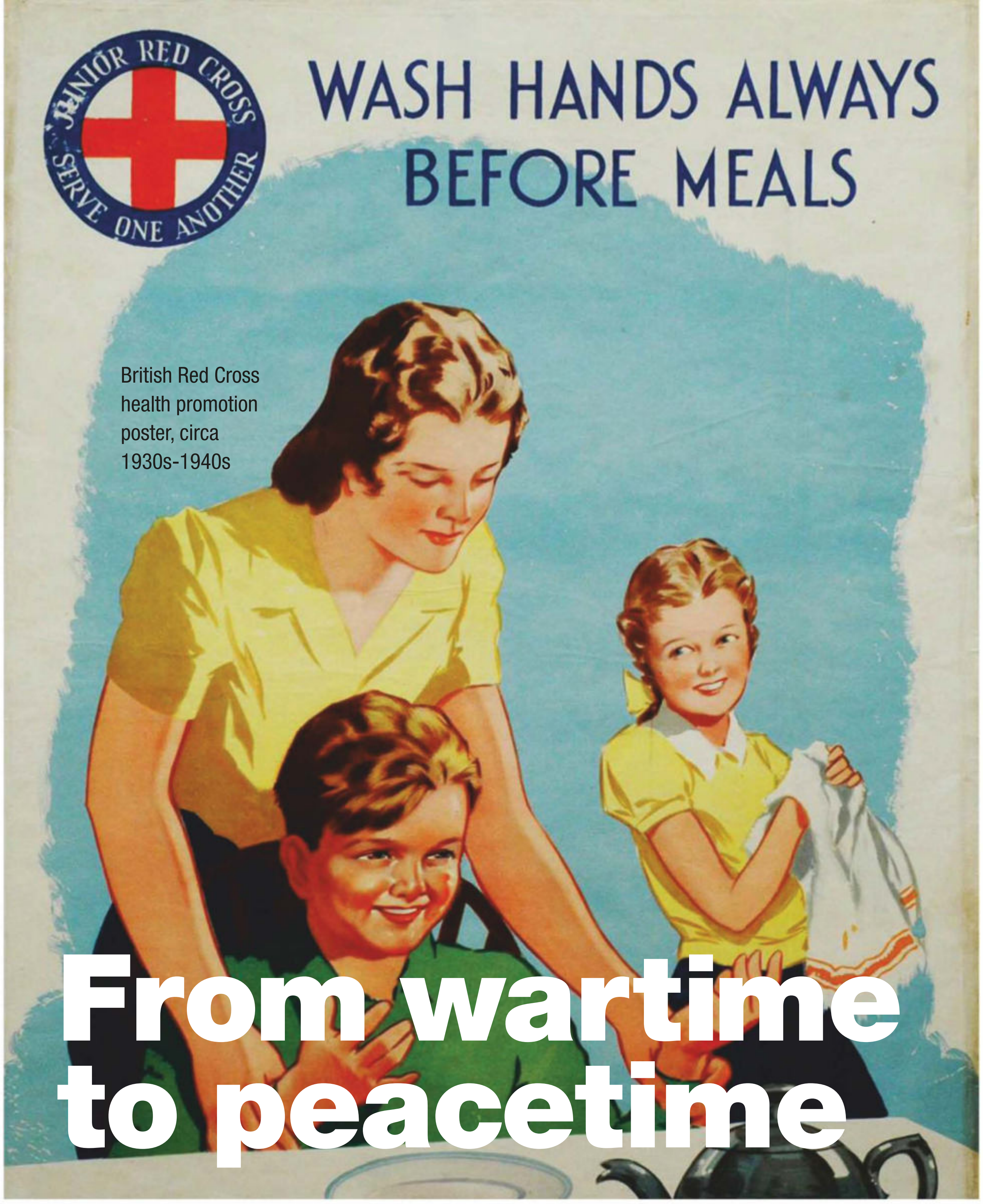


Italian stallion
A 19th-century terracotta figurine of Giuseppe Garibaldi. Thousands of such ornaments were produced, reflecting the Victorian craze for the Italian commander and his romanticised image

GETTY IMAGES

David Olusoga is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. He presents *A House Through Time*, which is airing now on BBC Two and will be available on BBC iPlayer

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



British Red Cross health promotion poster, circa 1930s-1940s

From wartime to peacetime

Dr Nelson's Inhaler was first introduced in 1865 for the treatment of chest infections and diseases

Before drips became widespread, keeping patients hydrated was difficult. Feeding cups made it easier for VAD nurses to get fluids into patients too weak to sit upright

NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS BUT, WITH YOUR GENEROSITY, ONE THING CAN REMAIN CERTAIN: THE BRITISH RED CROSS WILL BE THERE TO HELP THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST.

BY MEHZEBIN ADAM, CURATOR, BRITISH RED CROSS MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Considered the deadliest global pandemic in history, the 1918 influenza (also known as the Spanish flu) killed between 50 and 100 million people worldwide. The health emergency demonstrated that the greatest threats to humanity are not always born out of war and conflict, and therefore changed the course of the Red Cross forever.

Having once worked only to provide relief to the sick and wounded in wartime, the Red Cross played an essential role in caring for those affected by the influenza pandemic from 1918 to 1920. Historical records highlight the tremendous sacrifices made by Red Cross volunteers, many of whom caught the virus while nursing patients. The British Red Cross also distributed large numbers of medical supplies to hospitals across the country, as well as overseas.

Following the end of WWI, the League of Red Cross Societies – later named the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies – was formed. Its aim to improve health was simple: to continue responding to health crises, while also working to prevent them by promoting health, hygiene and first aid.

Since then, the British Red Cross has delivered a range of health and social care services and supported the NHS. During the current global coronavirus pandemic, Red Cross societies around the world are at the forefront of the emergency response. In Britain, it is giving useful health advice to the incredible volunteers who are out there helping the country's most vulnerable.

While people everywhere face challenges during the current health crisis, the British Red Cross is determined to show the human capacity to support one another and how kindness will keep us together – and, with your help, this work will never have to stop.

THE FREE WILL SCHEME

The work carried out by the British Red Cross is as essential today as it was at the time of the 1918 influenza. Thanks to the support of people like you, the Red Cross is always ready to help those in crisis, whether they're on the other side of the world or on your own street. By leaving a gift in your will, you can leave your own legacy to ensure the British Red Cross can continue to support vulnerable people – for the next 150 years and beyond.

150 years the power of kindness

BritishRedCross

For more information about supporting the British Red Cross with a gift in your will and the Free Will scheme, visit redcross.org.uk/freewill or call 0300 500 0401

LETTERS

The story of Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson has uncanny parallels with today, says reader Graham Seeman

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Island stories

I enjoyed the May issue features on VE Day, particularly the article on the differences across Europe. But as a Channel Islander born in Guernsey and resident in Jersey, I'm disappointed that historians still don't seem particularly interested in the experiences of British subjects whose lives were turned upside down by five years of German occupation.

The islanders, and the islands themselves, were forever altered. My mother, sisters and grandparents remained, and their home was near the enormous Mirus Battery which was regularly fired as practice, shaking the ground. My father left Guernsey intending to volunteer, and was needed in a factory producing Spitfire parts. He was separated from his island, his mother and one of his sisters but was on the first possible boat back. My husband's parents were also affected: a stranded volunteer soldier, his father was eventually arrested and imprisoned.

Cut off from supplies after D-Day, every islander struggled desperately and suffered from a lack of basics, until a Red Cross ship, the *Vega*, was finally permitted to bring life-saving food parcels. There are many stories of the occupied islanders, those serving in the forces (both British and French), and evacuees and deportees that deserve to be more widely known.

There is a special poignancy to 2020, as those left from the occupation generation faced the 75th anniversary of liberation, on 9 May, in lockdown.

Marlene Morris, Jersey

We reward the *Letter of the Month* writer with a copy of a new history book. This issue, that is **The Habsburgs: The Rise and Fall of a World Power** by Martyn Rady. You can read our review of the book on page 74

The past on its own terms

I read Suleiman Mourad's absorbing article, *A Clash of Civilisations?*, shortly after reading your equally revealing interview with Hilary Mantel (both June). I am struck by the similarity in their approaches to their respective disciplines.

In the context of the writing of history, Mourad says: "We have inadvertently allowed modern agendas – one Eurocentric, the other Islamocentric – to determine the way we have reconstructed crusader history." In the context of the writing of historical fiction, Mantel says: "There's no point writing about the past if what you really want to write about is the present". Both discuss the crossover between history and historical fiction: Mourad laments the agenda apparent in Cecil B DeMille's 1935 film *The Crusades* (as well as that in Al Jazeera's more recent documentary on the crusades); Mantel acknowledges the link between her writing and recent studies of Cromwell.

They are right. Whatever our discipline, we must strive to understand the past on its own terms. Any other approach is either lazy or disingenuous. It either unintentionally colludes in the distortion of the past or, worse still, represents the conscious production of propaganda in disguise.

Congratulations on your 20th anniversary, too. I still have my copy of every issue!

Richard Godden, London

Further Information

In the May issue's *Q&A* section, Eugene Byrne necessarily had to be brief when referencing the Ministry of Information (as illustrated below) in his summary of the numerous ministerial portfolios and departments no longer in existence – a testament to the adaptability of British governmental administration!

For those interested in finding out more about the Ministry of Information, originally founded in 1918 and revived in 1939, as well as its successor institutions, the Central Office of Information (COI) and now the Government Communication Service (GCS) – which works across Whitehall and beyond – the Cabinet Office published *100 Years of Government Communication* in 2018. A link to the online version of the book can be found at *https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/news/100-years-of-government-communication*. Readers may be particularly surprised by the far from straightforward story of the 'Keep Calm and Carry On' poster.

Alexander Z McKenna, GCS Historian in Residence, Cabinet Office, London

INFORMATION

Royal parallels

I am sure I am not the only reader for whom Dominic Sandbrook's opening sentence in the *Anniversaries* entry for 3 June, on the wedding of the former Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson, rang with a hollow irony. [Sandbrook wrote: "Today it seems unimaginable that a member of the House of Windsor would relinquish his royal duties after falling in love with an American divorcee."]

There is undoubtedly a great deal more goodwill from the people of this country towards the Duke and Duchess of Sussex than there ever was for Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson, and the fact that the bride was a divorcee (American or otherwise) is no longer a cause for comment, let alone scandal. Nevertheless, the way events have unfolded has ended in a result that is unnervingly similar to 1937. A prince of the House of Windsor has indeed relinquished his royal duties and now lives abroad with his American wife.

I can only assume that, as magazines are put together months ahead of their publication date, Mr Sandbrook's opening comment has been overtaken by events that could not have been foreseen.

Graham Seeman, Wiltshire

Hard lives

I would like to add to the interview with Emma Griffin regarding family life in the Victorian era (*Books*, June). In my own research on the Lancashire area, where almost all the imported slave-grown cotton was processed, I found that 29,038 girls and 25,613 boys aged under 14 were working directly in the cotton industry. In the 1840s, over half the workers in the industry were women. They either had to find someone to look after their babies, or were permitted to bring them in a basket and line them up against the factory's wall.

The women were not given time off in their 14-hour working day to breastfeed their babies, so a local pharmacist developed a 'quietening syrup' – laudanum or opium. The children stopped crying and soon died.

In 1846, the death rate for boys and girls was just about equal. For boys under one

GETTY IMAGES/GLEN MCBETH

Guernsey residents with food deliveries following the island's liberation, 1945. The wartime experiences of Channel Islanders are often overlooked, reader Marlene Morris argues

GETTY IMAGES

it was 27 per cent and, for girls, 21 per cent; for boys and girls between the ages of one and two, just over 10 per cent; and, for all children aged between two and three, five per cent. What sort of 'family life' did the women in Lancashire have?
Marika Sherwood, Oare

Back to the old ways?

I read David Olusoga's article on leper hospitals (*Hidden Histories*, June) with interest, as I was raised in central Africa on a medical mission station. As well as the hospital, my father built up a significant 'leprosy settlement', so I learned quite a bit about Hansen's Disease, as it is now known. My eye was especially caught by a sentence in the article. Following an explanation about how open treatment centres were at times in history, David writes that it was "all a far cry from modern notions of clinical isolation".

Even when I was a child in the 1960s, I was aware that 'nowadays' we know that it's actually quite difficult to catch Hansen's: you really have to live with a sufferer. So it turns out that the oldies had it right after all!
Heather Berry, Redditch

WRITE TO US

We welcome your letters, while reserving the right to edit them. We may publish your letters on our website. Please include a daytime phone number and, if emailing, a postal address (not for publication). Letters should be no longer than 250 words.
email: *letters@historyextra.com* **Post:** Our office is currently closed so unfortunately we can only receive email communication at this time

The opinions expressed by our commentators are their own and may not represent the views of *BBC History Magazine* or the Immediate Media Company

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

EDITORIAL
Editor Rob Attar *robertattar@historyextra.com*
World history editor Matt Elton *mattelton@historyextra.com*
Production editor Spencer Mizen
Section editors Ellie Cawthorne and Jon Bauckham
Picture editor Samantha Nott *samnott@historyextra.com*
Deputy picture editor Katherine Mitchell
Group art editor Susanne Frank
Senior deputy art editor Rachel Dickens
Art editor, special editions Sarah Lambert
Digital editor Emma Mason *emmamason@historyextra.com*
Deputy digital editor Elinor Evans
Digital editorial assistant Rachel Dinning

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Advertising manager
Sam Jones 0117 300 8145
Sam.Jones@immediate.co.uk
Business development manager
Kate Chetwynd-Lawton 0117 300 8532
Brand sales executive
Max Spalton 0117 300 8530
Classified sales manager
Rebecca Janyshiwskyj
Classified sales executive
Alexander Armstrong 0117 300 8538
Alex.Armstrong@immediate.co.uk
Group direct marketing manager
Laurence Robertson 00353 5787 57444
Subscriptions director Jacky Perales-Morris
Subscriptions marketing manager
Natalie Lawrence
US representative Kate Buckley
buckley@buckleypell.com

PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS
PR manager Emma Cooney 0117 300 8507
Emma.Cooney@immediate.co.uk

SYNDICATION
Director of licensing & syndication Tim Hudson
International partners' manager Anna Brown

HISTORYEXTRA PODCAST
Podcast producer Ben Youatt
Podcast assistant Jack Bateman

PRODUCTION
Production director Sarah Powell
Production co-ordinator Emily Mounter
Ad co-ordinator Jade O'Halloran
Ad designer Julia Young

IMMEDIATE MEDIA COMPANY
Content director David Musgrove
Commercial director Jemima Dixon
Managing director Andy Healy
Group managing director Andy Marshall
CEO Tom Bureau

BBC STUDIOS, UK PUBLISHING
Managing Director, Consumer Products and Licensing Stephen Davies
Head of publishing Mandy Thwaites
Compliance manager Cameron McEwan
Chair, Editorial Review Boards Nicholas Brett
UK publishing coordinator Eva Abramik
(uk.publishing@bbc.com)

IMMEDIATE MEDIA Co
Vol 21 No 7 July 2020
BBC History Magazine is published by Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited under licence from BBC Studios who help fund new BBC programmes.

BBC History Magazine was established to publish authoritative history, written by leading experts, in an accessible and attractive format. We seek to maintain the high journalistic standards traditionally associated with the BBC.

© Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited, 2020 – ISSN: 1469 8552
Not for resale. All rights reserved. Unauthorised reproduction in whole or part is prohibited without written permission. Every effort has been made to secure permission for copyright material. In the event of any material being used inadvertently, or where it proved impossible to trace the copyright owner, acknowledgement will be made in a future issue. MSS, photographs and artwork are accepted on the basis that *BBC History Magazine* and its agents do not accept liability for loss or damage to same. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher.

We abide by IPSO's rules and regulations. To give feedback about our magazines, please visit immediate.co.uk, email *editorialcomplaints@immediate.co.uk* or write to Katherine Conlon, Immediate Media Co., Vineyard House, 44 Brook Green, London W6 7BT.

Immediate Media Company is working to ensure that all of its paper is sourced from well-managed forests. This magazine can be recycled, for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of it at your local collection point.

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

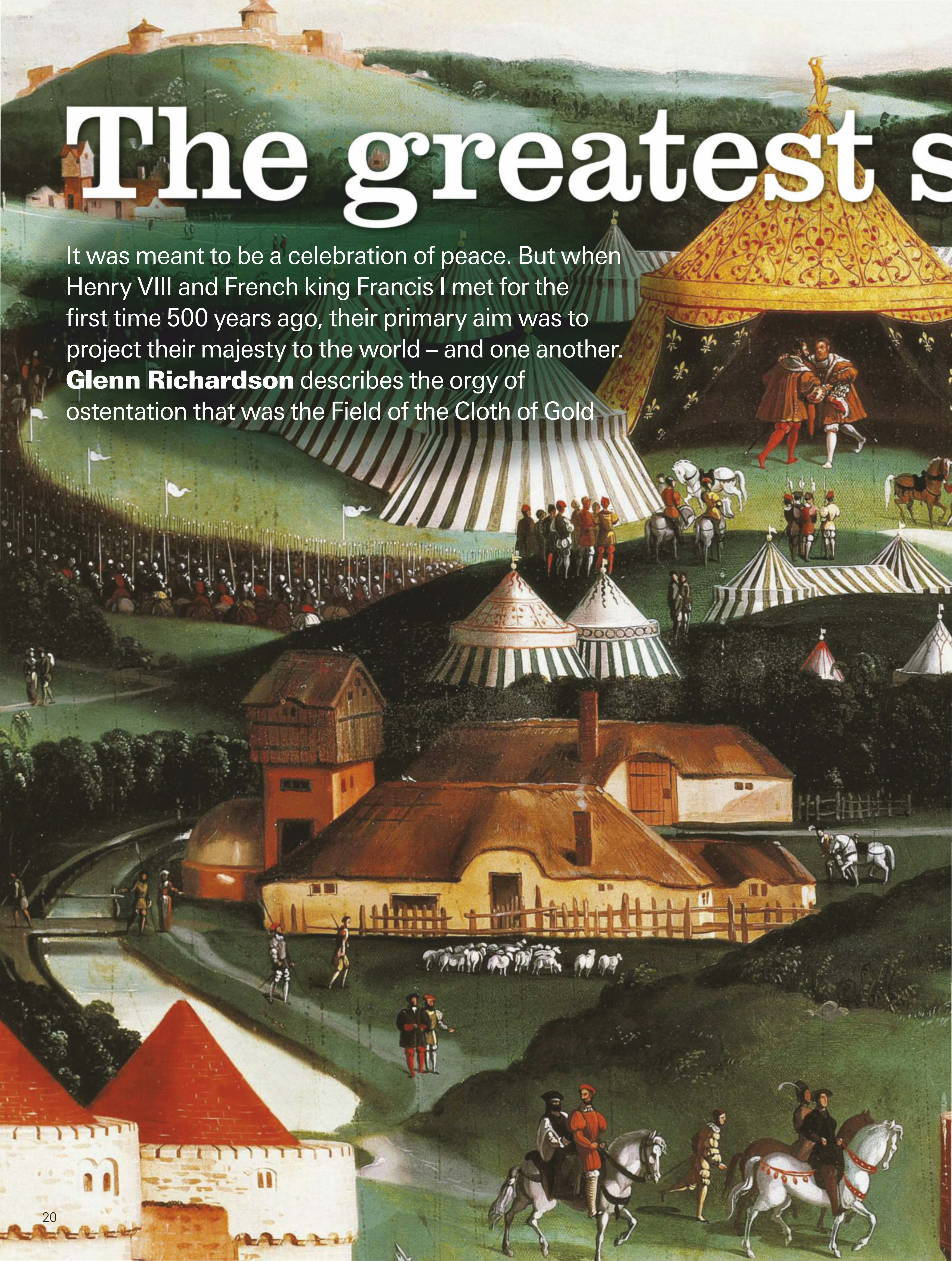
ipso. Regulated

abc Jan–Dec 2019 **93,931**

20th ANNIVERSARY SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

Save when you **subscribe** to digital editions

See **page 44** for details



The greatest s

It was meant to be a celebration of peace. But when Henry VIII and French king Francis I met for the first time 500 years ago, their primary aim was to project their majesty to the world – and one another. **Glenn Richardson** describes the orgy of ostentation that was the Field of the Cloth of Gold

18+

WHAT IS
AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME -

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

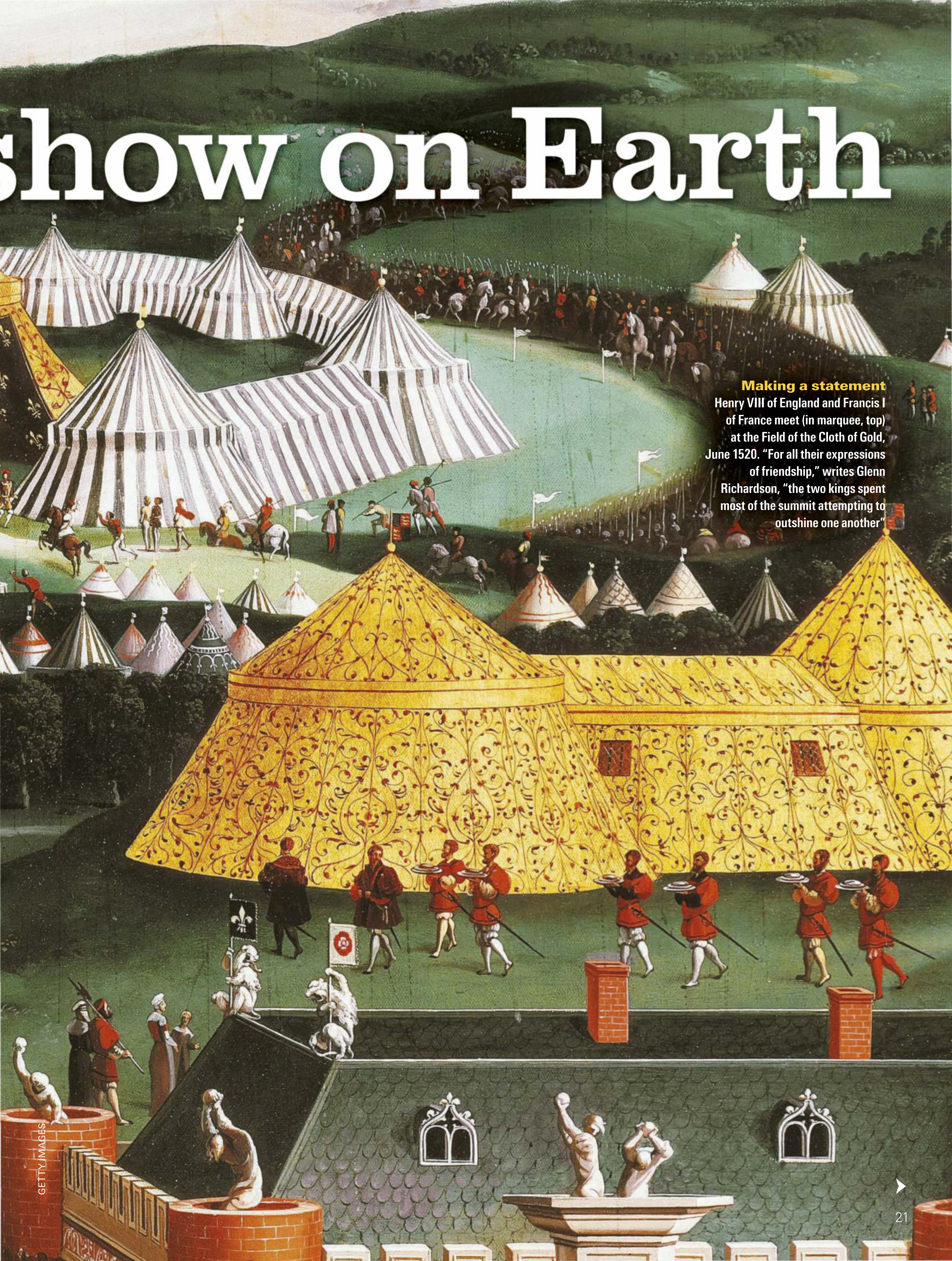
All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

show on Earth



Making a statement Henry VIII of England and Francis I of France meet (in marquee, top) at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, June 1520. "For all their expressions of friendship," writes Glenn Richardson, "the two kings spent most of the summit attempting to outshine one another"

GETTY IMAGES

They crashed together "with a noise like thunder that resounds to the very stars". That's how a contemporary poet described a clash of French and English knights in a shallow vale in what is now northern France 500 years ago.

English and French troops had fought one another in landscapes such as this for centuries. But this was a showdown with a difference. For these knights weren't fighting to the death. Instead, they were jousting. And they were doing so as a grand expression of reconciliation in one of early modern Europe's most famous peace summits – at a site that is now known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

The summit in the Pale of Calais was staged for two reasons: to put the seal on a new Franco-English alliance that had been signed in London in 1518, and to inaugurate a "Universal Peace" across Christendom. But what took place over 17 days from 7 June 1520 was a lot more than a diplomatic conference designed to bring to an end years of conflict between the continent's leading nations. For the Field of the Cloth of Gold was every bit as much about showmanship, extravagance and almost obscene levels of royal self-indulgence as it was about peace. And it very much reflected the substantial egos of its two leading protagonists: Henry VIII of England and his French counterpart, Francis I.

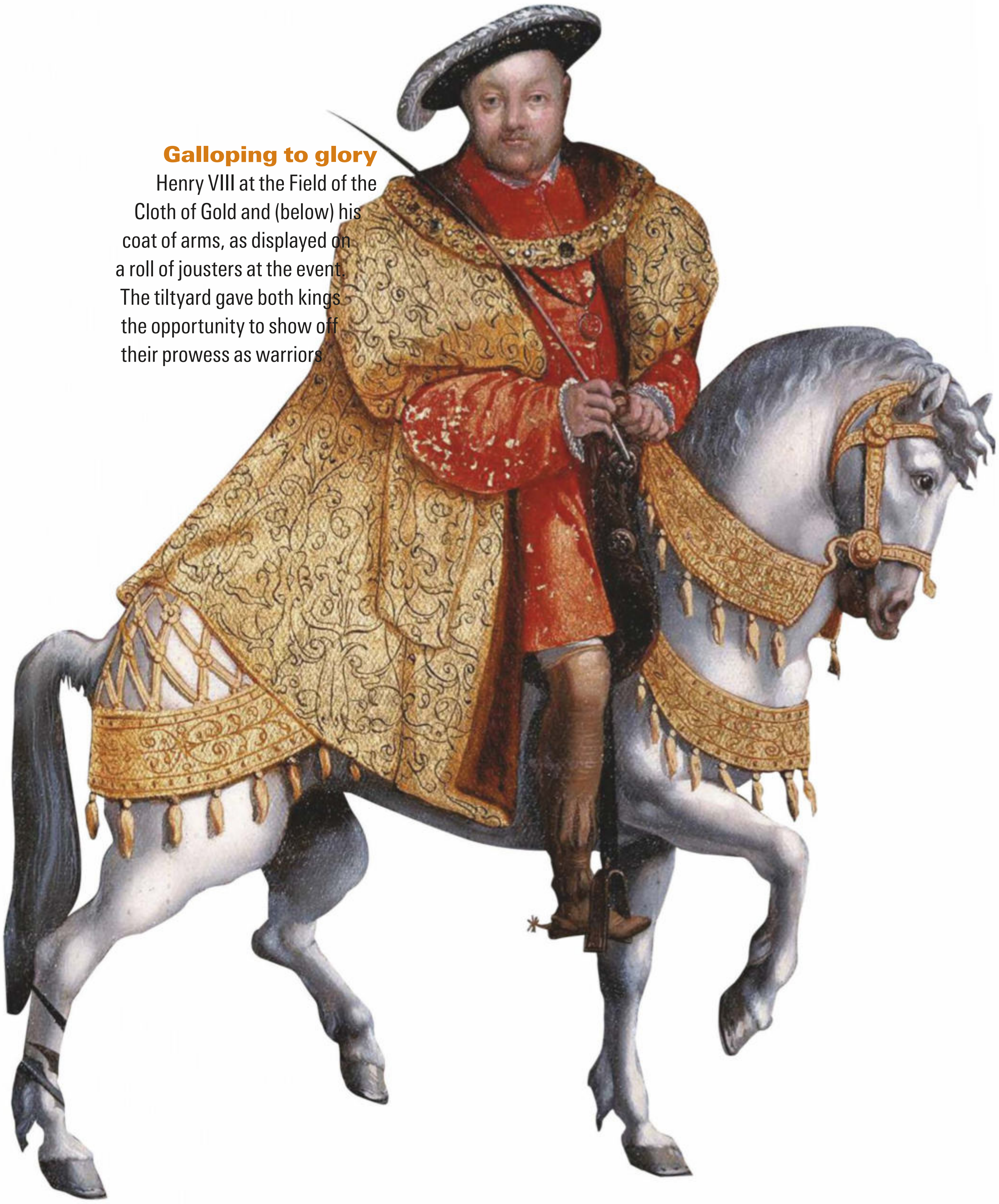
Aged 28 and 25 respectively, Henry and Francis were young and ambitious. Both men saw the summit as an opportunity to make a grand statement to the watching world – and to one another: to project their wealth, their might and their impeccable taste on the grandest of stages. This showmanship informed every aspect of the meeting as it got under way in the countryside between the towns of Guînes and Ardres.

The feat of arms

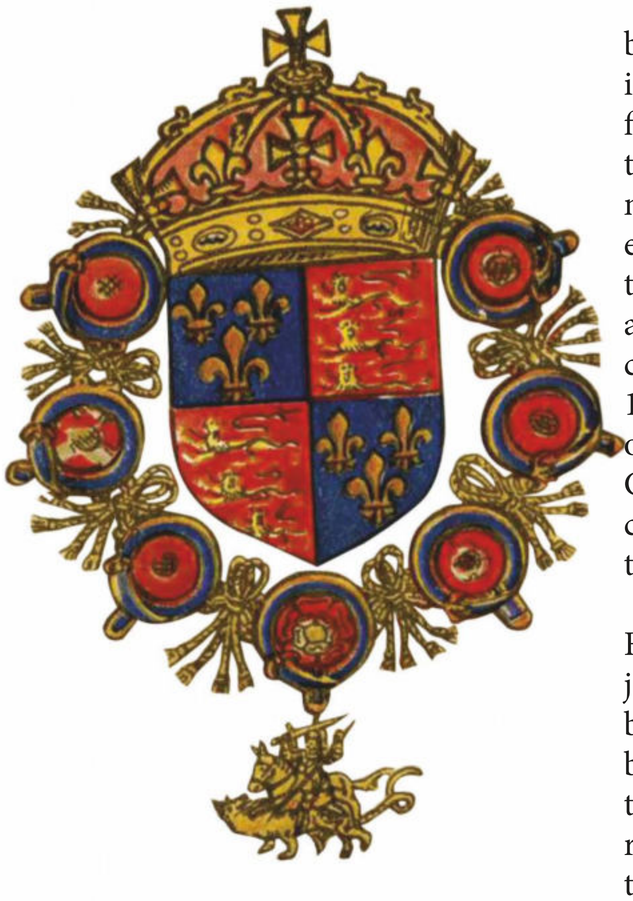
Both kings arrived with enormous retinues – each numbering around 6,000 people, and including within their ranks the highest nobles and officials of their realms. The entourages – which also included hundreds of knights, gentlemen and troops – were housed in scores of tents erected to create enormous pavilions in the fields directly below the walls of the two towns. These pavilions were dressed in rich velvets of many colours, adorned with gold roses, fleurs-de-lis and the gold-threaded material that gave the event its name.

The chief aim of the summit may have been to strengthen the bond of friendship between Henry and Francis. But also looming large on the organisers' minds as they finalised their preparations for the event was the imperative of ensuring that neither monarch upstaged the other – that both men emerged with their pride intact. To this end, the two kings, who had never before met one another, had originally been supposed to convene on neutral ground. But, in February 1520, Francis agreed to do Henry the honour of entering English territory – as the Pale of Calais then was. In return, Francis was given control of the tournament that accompanied the summit.

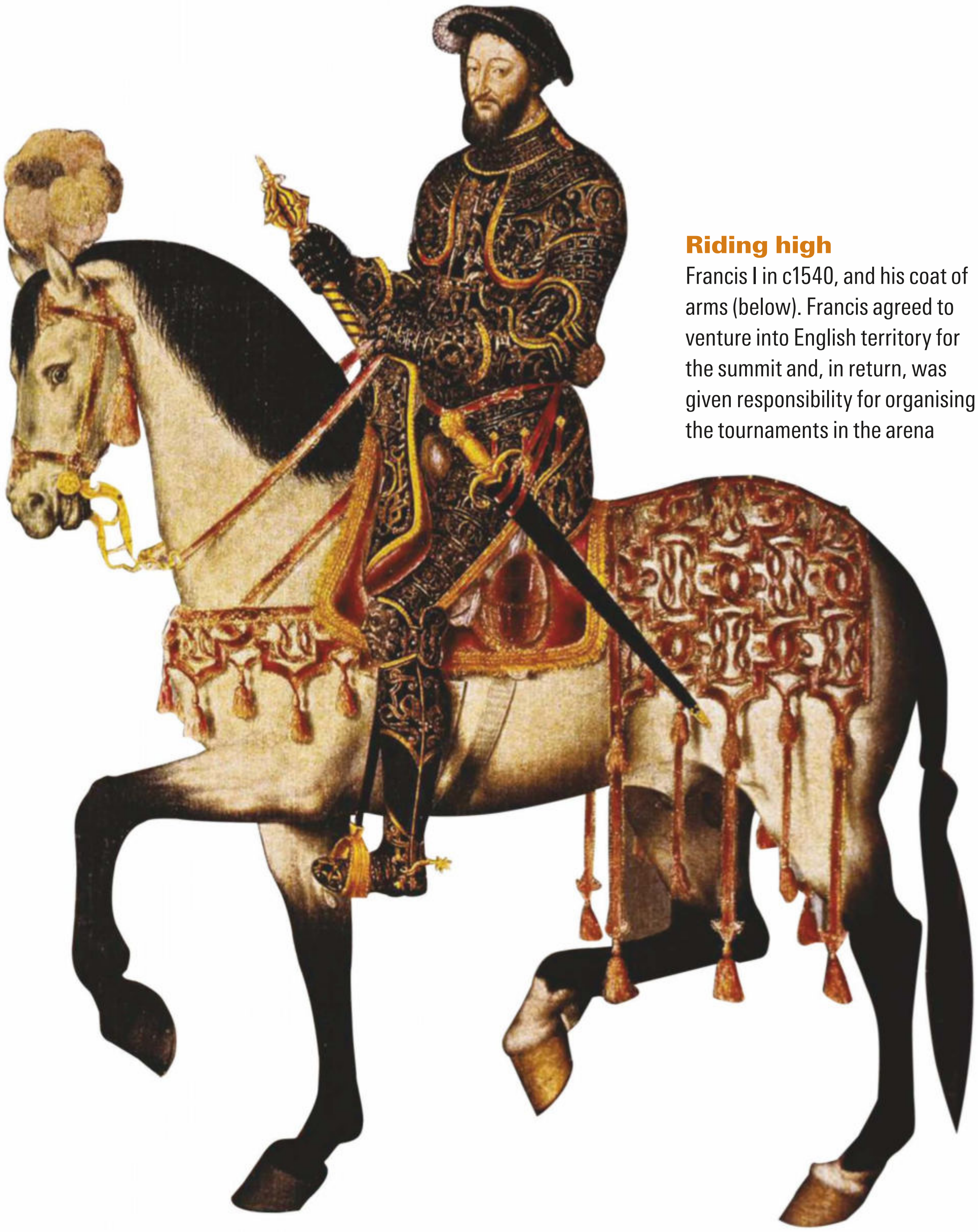
For that tournament, or "feat of arms", the French king devised three competitions: jousting, mounted combats in the arena between groups of knights, and foot combat between knights over barriers. These competitions were staged in a specially constructed rectangular tiltyard with stands for spectators to view the entertainment put on by an



Galloping to glory
Henry VIII at the Field of the Cloth of Gold and (below) his coat of arms, as displayed on a roll of jousters at the event. The tiltyard gave both kings the opportunity to show off their prowess as warriors



This was an opportunity for both men to put on a show – and outshine their counterpart in the process



Riding high
Francis I in c1540, and his coat of arms (below). Francis agreed to venture into English territory for the summit and, in return, was given responsibility for organising the tournaments in the arena

estimated 200–300 participants.

The two kings never competed directly against one other. Instead, they led mixed teams of French and English knights as challengers against all-comers in a series of mock combats designed to show off their prowess as warriors. (The surviving score checks suggest that both monarchs performed reasonably well, but that the standard of jousting was not particularly high – chiefly due to inclement weather.)

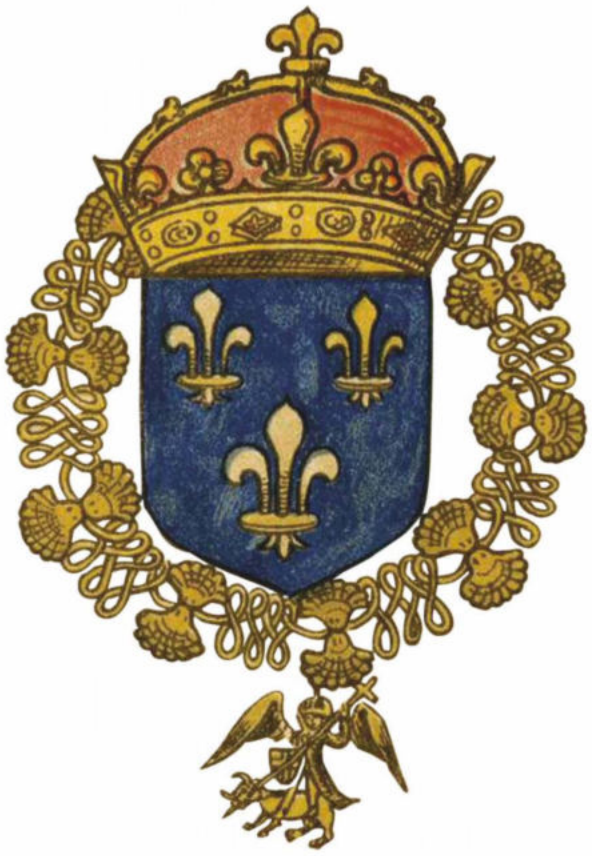
Fine dining

On the two Sundays over which the tournament was staged, the focus switched from fighting to feasting, as the kings hosted one another at banquets of extraordinary ingenuity and scale.

This wasn't just fine dining; this was an opportunity for both men to put on a show – and outshine their counterpart in the process. And nowhere was this desire to impress more evident than in the temporary banqueting palace that the English built just outside the walls of Guînes.

Comprising four blocks ranged around a central square court, and encircled by brick and timber-framed walls reaching to 9 metres, and topped by battlements, this 10,000-metre-square edifice was a remarkable feat of engineering. And, boasting four brick-built towers at its outer corners and an elaborate entrance gateway surmounted by a Renaissance shell motif, it must have made for an imposing sight to its visiting French guests.

Yet perhaps its most impressive features lay within. The palace incorporated a banqueting hall, a chapel and a suite of rooms for Henry and his wife, Catherine of Aragon; his sister Mary, the Duchess of Suffolk; and his chancellor, Cardinal Wolsey. One French source described the edifice as being "flooded with light on every side from windows made of glass… that stretch to the very floor, displaying English sovereigns". As an expression of English technological expertise – and, with it, the power and personal sophistication of the English king – it took some beating.

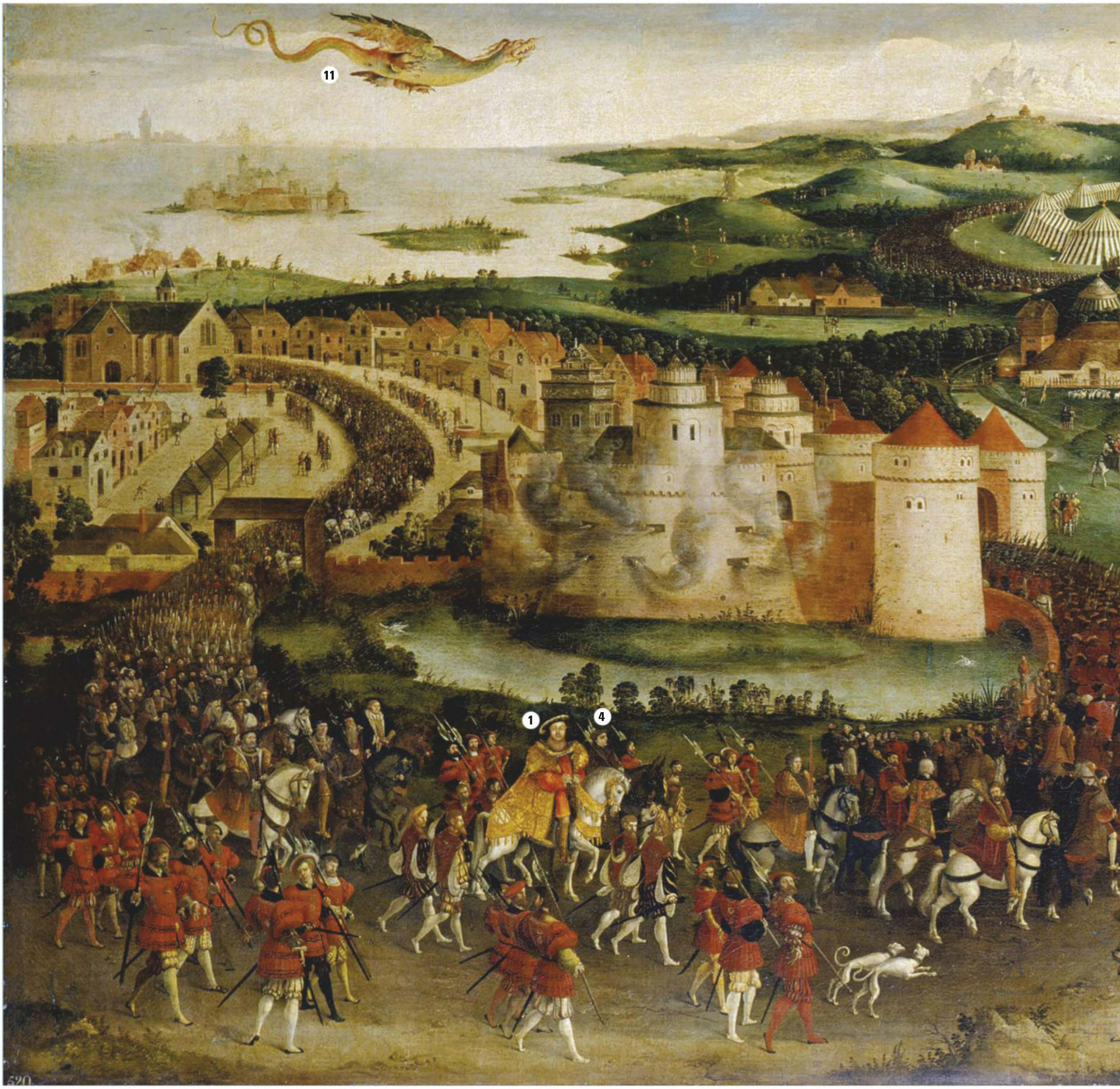


Francis built or adapted a similarly splendid temporary residence in the town of Ardres, at which Henry and his close entourage were received. We know less about this building than its English counterpart. But we do know that it, too, was highly decorated, had an impressive banqueting hall and a covered gallery that linked it to the tented city of pavilions in the fields below the town.

The banquets presented within these palaces were structured around a series of three or more courses, each of which consisted typically of about 50 dishes, all served to music and fanfares. Imaginative and entertaining table settings of castles and horsemen – fashioned out of marzipan – provided the guests with points of conversation.

And helping the conversation flow was the finest alcohol money could buy. Wine, sourced in Burgundy, the Loire Valley and Bordeaux, flowed freely. Beer and ale were shipped over

GETTY IMAGES



ALAMY

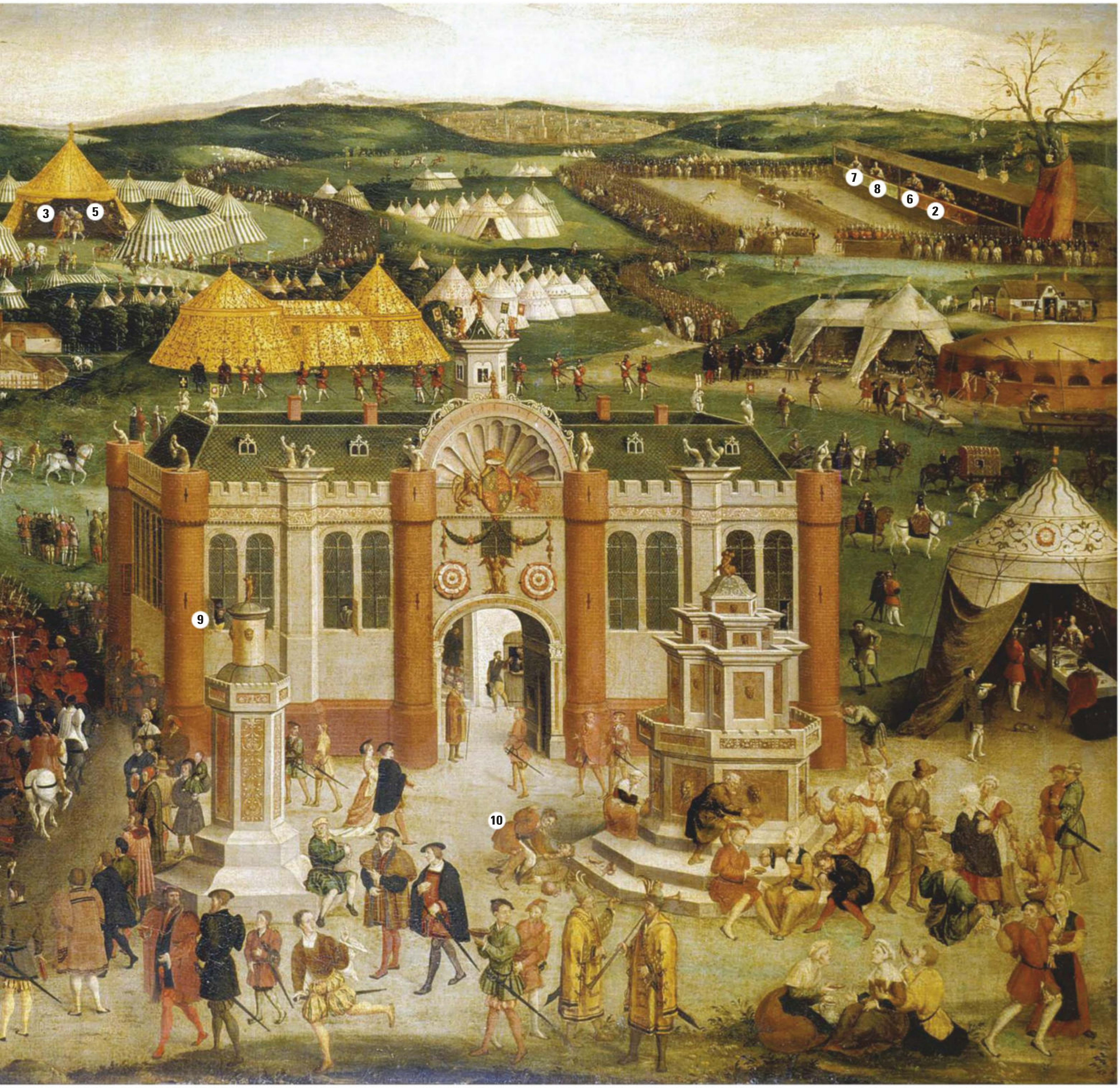
THE ART OF DIPLOMACY

A visual representation of Henry and Francis's showdown

This sumptuous work of art – known as *The Field of Cloth of Gold*, and housed at Hampton Court Palace – is the most famous depiction of the famous summit between Henry VIII and Francis I. It dates to the 1540s and was probably one of a number of such artworks celebrating great moments in Henry's reign. As only the most cursory of glances at the painting will reveal, it is a composite evocation of the event, not an accurate record!

The foreground is dominated by ❶ **Henry VIII's entry to the Field**. He is apparently arriving at Guînes Castle for the main event but the order of the procession accords with descriptions of his first meeting with Francis on 7 June before the tournament got under way. Henry appears three times in the painting: **in the procession**; ❷ **watching the tournament** (top right); ❸ and **greeting Francis in a tent** in the central upper ground. The image of the English king (in the foreground) owes much to the famous German painter Hans Holbein the Younger, and the head of Henry first committed to canvas has at some point been replaced.

❹ **Cardinal Wolsey sits next to Henry** in dull clerical garb – though, in reality, he was dressed in crimson satin. French king ❺ Francis I is seen twice: **greeting Henry in the tent**, ❻ and **watching the jousting** at the tournament. Henry's wife, ❼



Catherine of Aragon, and her French counterpart, ❽ **Queen Claude of France** (then pregnant), are watching the jousting alongside the kings.

The impressive building dominating the right half of the painting is the temporary palace built by the English to entertain the French court. Inside the palace ❾ **a courtier can be seen climbing the staircase** to the first-floor level where there was a banqueting hall and suites of rooms for Henry, Catherine, Mary Tudor (Duchess of Suffolk), and Wolsey. The remainder of the main area is taken up with depictions of the kitchens, scenes of feasting and drinking at the fountain, which flowed with white and red wine. ❿ **Some people are drunkenly brawling** and one man vomits against the side of the palace (right).

The famous Field of the Cloth of Gold ⓫ **'dragon' appears at the top left edge of the painting**. Contemporary descriptions suggest that it was a kite deliberately flown over the Mass held at the climax of the event. According to these reports, it emitted smoke, hissed and was drawn on a thin cable behind a wagon. It may represent the Welsh dragon (although it wasn't red), in a nod to Henry's ancestry. Or, perhaps more likely, it was a salamander amid flames, the emblem of Francis I.

EYE-WATERING EXTRAVAGANCE

The Field of the Cloth of Gold in numbers

30,000

…yards of canvas were used to make the French tents for the summit. These were **stitched together by around 300 men and women** working in the archbishop's palace at Tours.

72,544

…**gold fleurs-de-lis on blue velvet** were used in the decoration of the pavilions of the French king and his immediate family.

29,518

Fish and seafood purchases for the English banquets come to a staggering 29,518 items, including plaice, flounder, conger eels and turbot. **Plus there was a dolphin!**

The English accounts record payments for no fewer than 98,050 eggs. More than **1 million planks of firewood** were used in the ovens in the temporary kitchens.

Hundreds of technicians and labourers of both nations built the tournament tiltyard together on a joint civil project. This sort of **Anglo-French enterprise** would not be repeated until the construction of Concorde in the 1960s and the Channel Tunnel.

5,832

The total English entourage numbered at least 5,832 people.

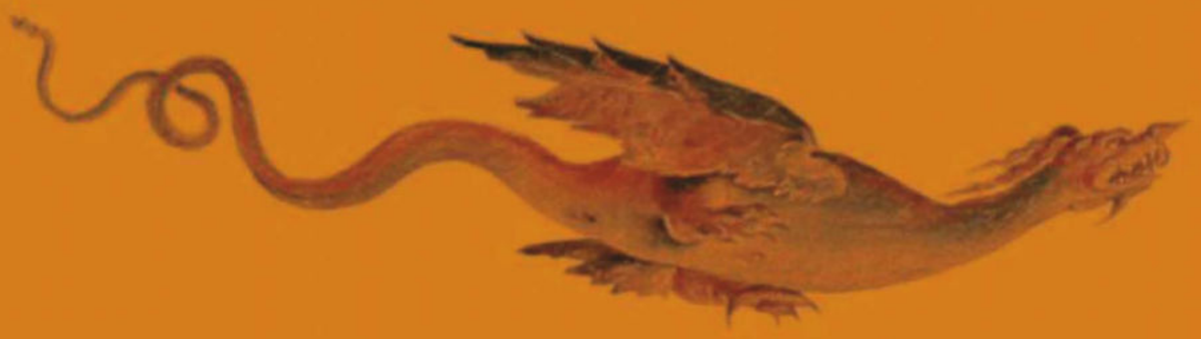
and **3,217** horses.

6,475

…birds were presented on the tables of the English banquets, including storks, bitterns, egrets and swans. **Peacocks were cooked and presented** redressed in their own plumage.

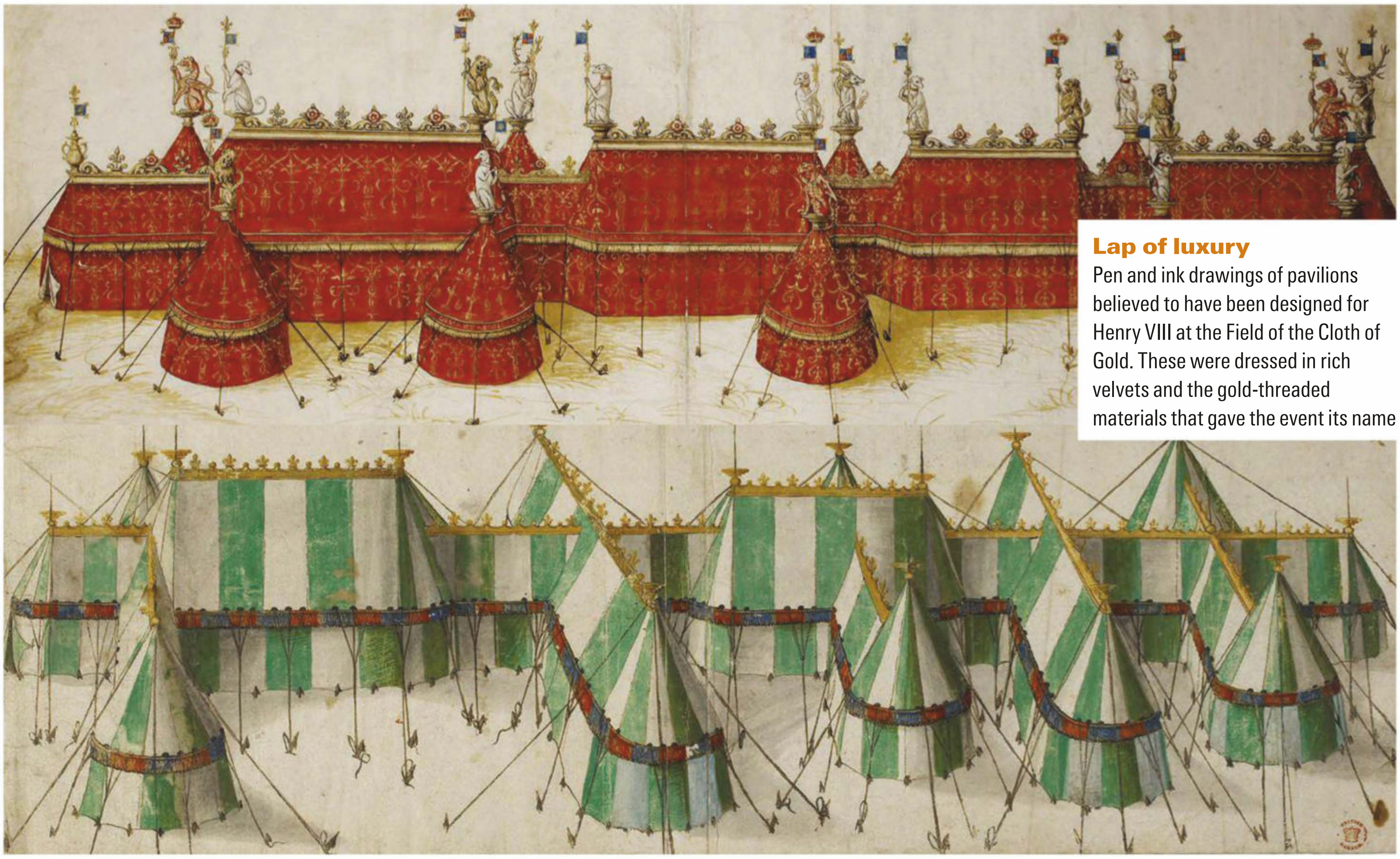
Some **4,000–5,000 tradesmen and labourers** on each side prepared the **tents, tiltyard and temporary accommodation** – that almost matches the number of participants at the event itself.

Four forges were brought from England and set up at Guînes, and **24 armourers were installed** to make and repair equipment employed in the tournament.



And, finally, 1 dragon (or, perhaps, a salamander)!

DREAMSTIME/BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY



Lap of luxury
Pen and ink drawings of pavilions believed to have been designed for Henry VIII at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. These were dressed in rich velvets and the gold-threaded materials that gave the event its name

BRIDGEMAN

from England, and also brewed locally in Calais. The range, sheer volume and expense of the fare set out before the guests was astounding, even by the standards of the upper ranks of contemporary society.

Once the meals were concluded, the company danced in formal masques, with the kings and their courtiers donning elaborate costumes and acting out parts as heroes in chivalric and classical romances. The two monarchs showed off their moves and greeted the ladies of one another's courts, before making carefully synchronised returns to their respective residences.

Henry challenged Francis to a wrestling match, which – to his great embarrassment – he lost decisively

Henry's prisoner

For all the pomp and circumstance and expressions of amity, both kings chafed under the strict protocols designed to prevent one from overshadowing the other at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. That perhaps accounts for Henry's decision to challenge Francis to an impromptu wrestling match, which the French king won decisively – to Henry's great embarrassment. This incident was recorded in a French report of the meeting; English chroniclers, however, chose to ignore it.

This desire to steal the show may also help to explain Francis's apparently spontaneous decision to visit Guînes early one morning and there declare himself Henry's prisoner. In response, Henry was forced into a greater expression of friendship towards his French counterpart than he had previously been prepared to offer. He also presented Francis with a gift of a jewelled collar, to which Francis responded by giving Henry bracelets. All observers thought this episode something of a personal coup for the French king and, perhaps rather less unexpectedly, Henry duly reciprocated with his own 'surprise' visit to Francis at Ardres a few days later.

These exchanges – however competitive – didn't constitute a serious threat to the relationship that the two kings had established over the course of the summit. But they do reveal that the tournaments, the banquets and the exchange of lavish gifts were driven every bit as much by a desire to intimidate the opposing entourage as to build bridges with them. They were the means by which the monarchs displayed their personal qualities – and demanded respect in return.

After two weeks of mock combats, feasting and dancing, the meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold came to an end with a High Mass celebrated on 23 June at an outdoor chapel built over the tiltyard. At the zenith of the Mass, there appeared "flying in great loops, a splendid and hollow monster stretched out in the sky". The "monster" was in fact a kite – an enormous fire-breathing dragon, or perhaps a salamander, that dipped and soared above the crowd. It was a spectacularly ostentatious climax to what had been a spectacularly extravagant event.

But did this orgy of ostentation actually achieve anything? In diplomatic terms, did it really merit the eye-watering expense?

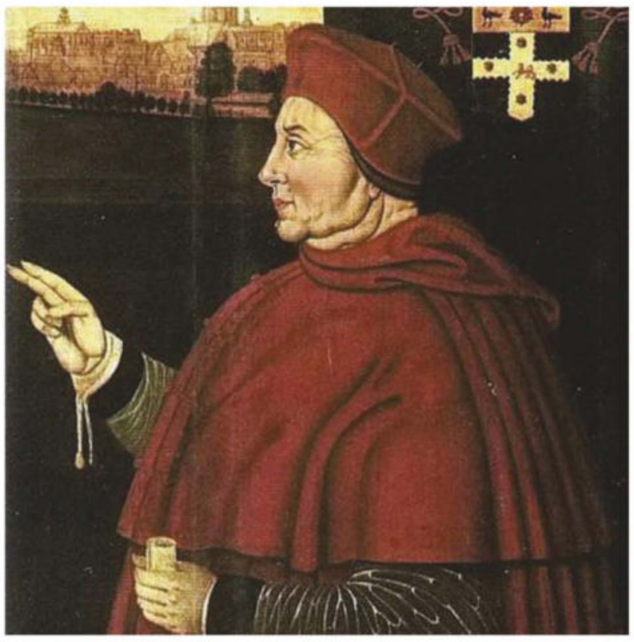
For all its magnificence, the Field of the Cloth of Gold has often been regarded as something of a puzzle. It has been described as a ludicrously optimistic peace conference, or a sham designed by King Henry to lull Francis into a false sense of security before attacking him. Yet it was neither – and to explain why, we must return to the beginning of Henry's reign.

When Henry ascended the throne in 1509, England controlled a tiny pocket of land in what is now northern France (known as the Pale of Calais). The new English king dreamed of regaining much of the French territory that once fell under the sway of his Plantagenet predecessors and so, in 1513, he invaded France (then ruled by Francis's father-in-law, Louis XII). But just a year later, Henry agreed a peace treaty with the French king – even offering Louis his sister Mary's hand in marriage. This was a smart move, but it was undermined by Louis's sudden death and Francis's accession in January 1515.

Then, in 1517, the Ottomans conquered Egypt and Syria, prompting Pope Leo X to call for an international truce in Europe, preparatory to military action against them. Leo's plea was widely heeded – and, by October 1518, all the major European sovereignties had committed themselves to what became known as the Treaty of Universal Peace. This international league was underpinned by an alliance secured by the betrothal of Henry's daughter, the future Mary I of England, to King Francis's son, the Dauphin François. One of the terms of the alliance was that Henry and Francis would meet personally – as they would go on to do at the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

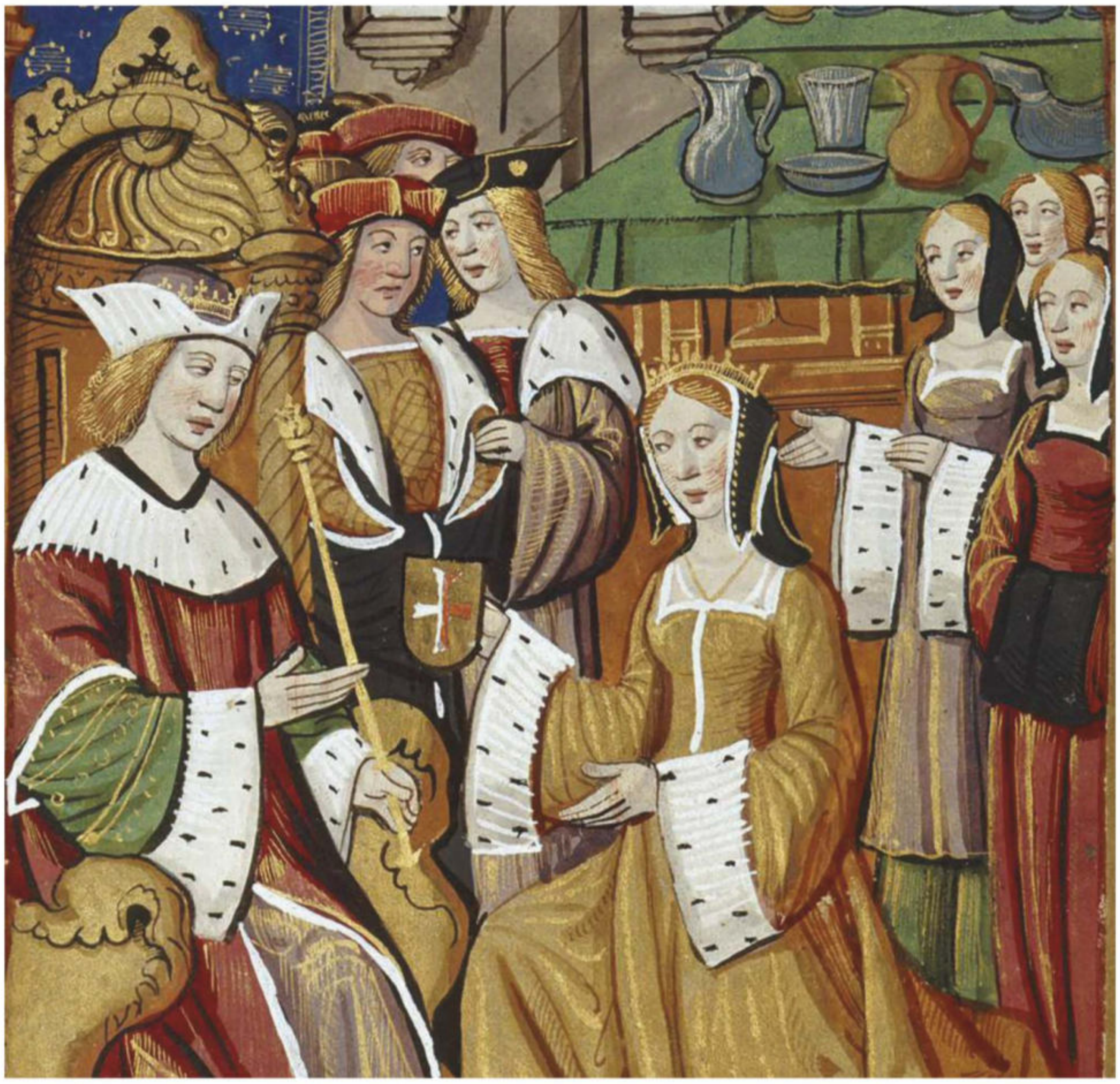
Paying a tribute

In the eyes of Cardinal Wolsey, one of the architects of the pact, the alliance had a chance of working but only if both kings profited by its terms. Francis was able to purchase (rather expensively) from Henry the city of Tournai lost to the English in war in 1513. Henry secured increased annual payments from Francis that he regarded as 'tribute' for 'his' kingdom of France. Francis also hoped Henry would offer him fuller support against his even greater rival, Charles of Spain, who was elected as the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in June 1519.



Praying for peace

A portrait of Cardinal Wolsey. Henry's chief adviser was an architect of the short-lived Anglo-French alliance that produced the meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold



Honeymoon period

French king Louis XII and Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, are married in 1514. The marriage cemented an entente between England and France, but when Louis died the following year, relations took a turn for the worse

As it turned out, the Treaty of 1518 did not bring a universal peace. Barely a year after the meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, Francis launched a pre-emptive strike against the emperor, fearful that if he did not, Charles would deprive him of the duchy of Milan, which Francis had conquered in 1515.

Henry was drawn formally into the war by 1522 after becoming Charles's ally and attacked France the following year. The conflict ended with Francis's defeat and capture by imperial forces at the battle of Pavia in February 1525. Henry was briefly hopeful that Charles and he might jointly carve up France between them, but could not raise the money to attack France again.

In January 1526, Francis signed the Treaty of Madrid – in which he agreed to cede vast swathes of territory to Charles – but rejected it after returning to France. He turned to Henry for support, and a renewed Anglo-French alliance had been reached by 1527.

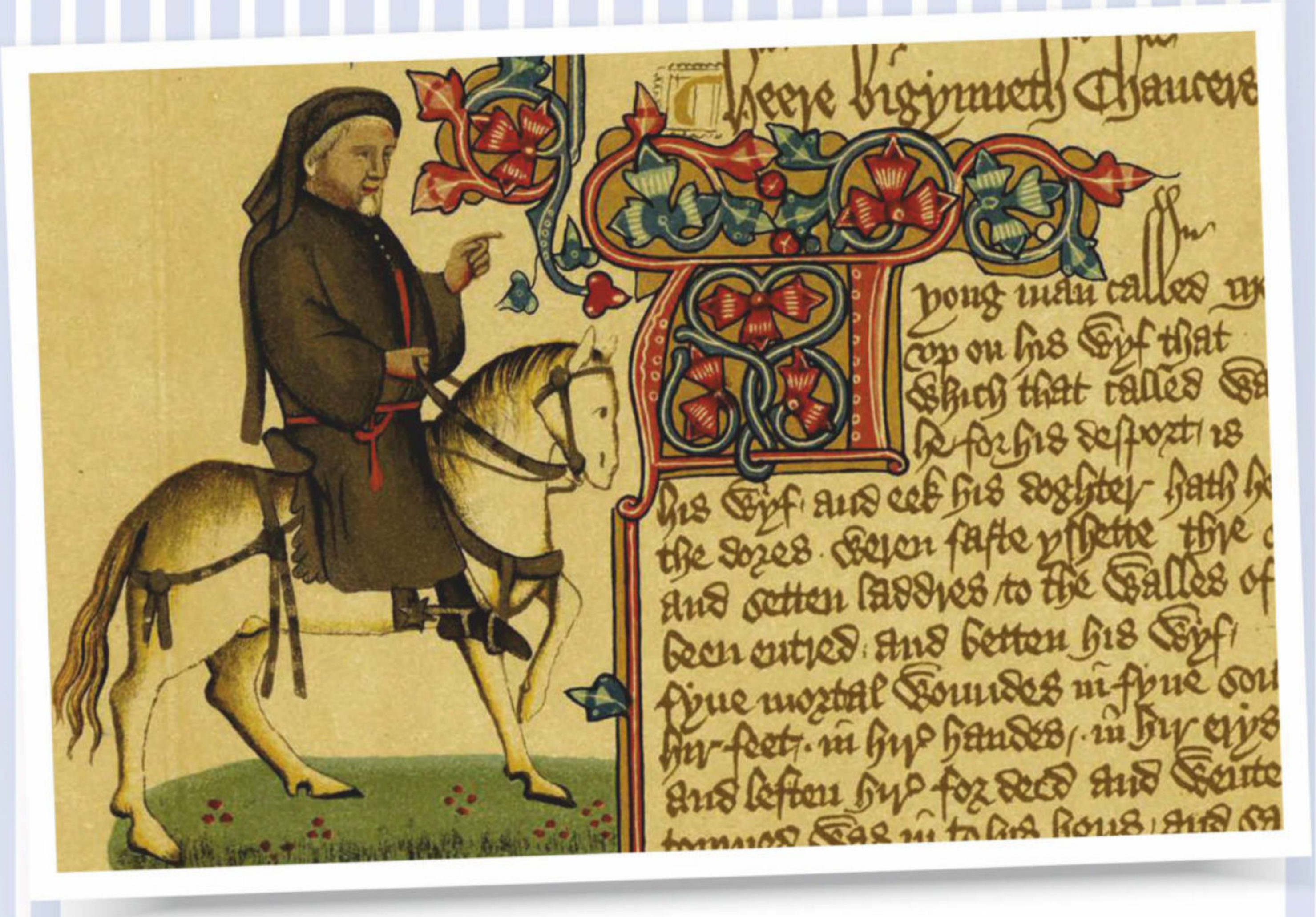
Henry and Francis met a second and final time at a scaled-down version of the Field of the Cloth of Gold at Calais and Boulogne in 1532. Thereafter a difficult but productive peace was maintained between them for 15 years. That's a long time in 16th-century international politics, and arguably a legacy of that extraordinary meeting in northern France in 1520.

Over the past five centuries, the Field of the Cloth of Gold has almost become a watchword for royal extravagance. And rightly so. But, as that long Anglo-French peace proves, it cannot be dismissed as frivolous. It served a purpose for both monarchs, enabling them to express their magnificence – in ways that both disconcerted and reassured their rivals. Above all, with the eyes of the world trained upon them, the Field of the Cloth of Gold provided Henry and Francis with a platform from which to project their personal power as Renaissance monarchs – both in times of peace and war. H

BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY

Glenn Richardson is professor of early modern history at St Mary's University, London. His book *The Field of Cloth of Gold* is due out in paperback, published by Yale, this month

LISTEN To listen to Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the **Field of the Cloth of Gold** on BBC Radio 4's *In Our Time*, go to *bbc.co.uk/programmes/p003k9dl*


Heere bigynneth Chaucers
yong man called
vp on his wyf that
which that called
he for his desport is
his wyf and eek his doghter hath
the dores weren faste yshette thre
And setten laddres to the walles of
been entred and betten his wyf
fyue mortal woundes in fyue
hir feet in hire handes in hir erys
And leften hire for deed and wente

"The world in which Chaucer moved was very outward-looking"

Geoffrey Chaucer is often hailed as the 'father of English literature'. Yet, argues **Marion Turner**, who has written an acclaimed biography of the poet, this epithet fails to capture the radical nature of his work

GETTY IMAGES

How would you introduce Geoffrey Chaucer to people who might only have heard of *The Canterbury Tales*?
Chaucer had an incredibly interesting life. He was a diplomat, and travelled widely all over Europe – which people usually don't expect from someone in the 14th century.

He was also an extraordinary innovator: he invented iambic pentameter, for example, which became the key poetic form in English. He wrote a huge variety of poetry in all kinds of genres, and was exceptionally widely read in many languages. So he brought something very new to English literature and culture.

Your biography explores Chaucer's life through the prism of places. What led you to structure it in that way, and why does his life benefit from that approach?
I realised that a chronological structure wouldn't allow me to write about the kinds of stories I wanted to tell about Chaucer's life – so I decided to structure the book through spaces. Some are real places that Chaucer visited, such as Genoa or Calais. Others are structures that we don't have in the same way today but which formed people's identities in the 14th century. And others are imaginative structures, such as the idea of the 'threshold', whose metaphors mattered to Chaucer.

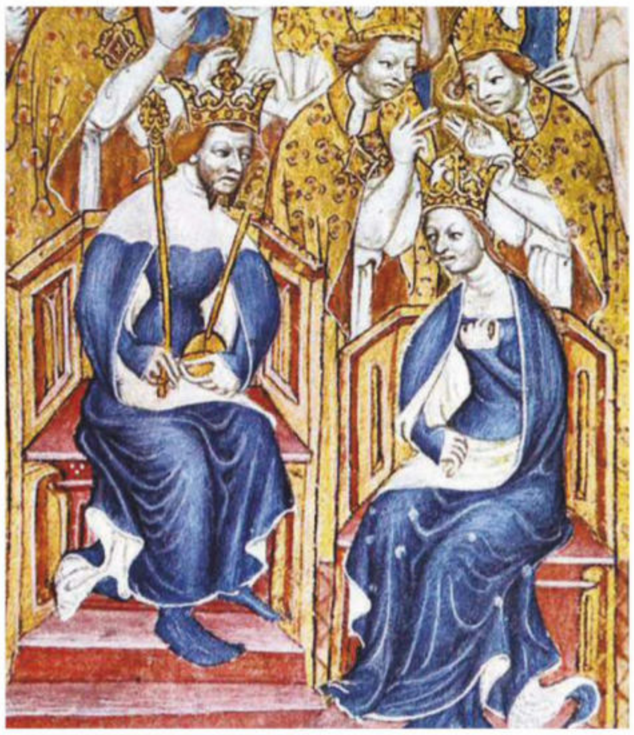
This approach is particularly useful for Chaucer's life because he was so widely travelled and did so many interesting things. It helps us understand how multinational and multilingual Chaucer was, but also the extent to which his era was one of enormous change.

What sorts of changes took place?
When Chaucer was about six years old, the Black Death hit. Of course, thinking about plagues feels horribly relevant right now, although the plague was far worse than what we're experiencing. It caused enormous social change – and not necessarily the kinds of change you might expect. A lot of social mobility developed in its wake: greater numbers of people moved to cities, labour was more in demand because of the reduction in population, and people were able to earn and spend higher wages.

What do we know about Chaucer's early life?
Chaucer's father was a vintner, or wine merchant, and Chaucer was born in the 1340s right on the waterfront in London's Vintry ward. It was a period in which there was enormous trade across the Silk Road into Europe. This meant that the mercantile quarter was an extremely cosmopolitan place to be brought up. The fact that Chaucer mixed with Italians and learnt Italian was crucial for his later career, for instance, because it meant that he was able to read poetry no on else in England was reading.

When he was a teenager, he got his first job in a great household, as a page to Elizabeth de Burgh, countess of Ulster. We know this from the first record to specifically mention Geoffrey, which describes an older woman buying him clothes. They were *paltoks*: very tight leggings and a short tunic, described as "extremely short garments which failed to conceal their arses or their private parts". Chroniclers thought it was outrageous that young men were showing off their bodies in this indecent way; some even said it was the cause of the plague coming to England.

I love this anecdote because we get a sense that nothing really changes. Older people today still say: "The youth of today are outrageous – look at the terrible clothes they wear." But on the other hand, it's not familiar at all: this young boy was paid not in wages but in clothes, bedding and food; he didn't get to choose what he wore; and he had to do what his rich employers wanted him to.



Verse and diversity Richard II and Anne of Bohemia as depicted in a contemporary manuscript. The cosmopolitan nature of England's court in this period was an important influence on Chaucer's work

PREVIOUS PAGE:
A depiction of Chaucer (c1342/43–1400) from an early manuscript of *The Canterbury Tales*. Written at the end of the 14th century, the work blends styles and genres

Chaucer went on to hold several positions in the royal household. How did his experiences there shape his worldview?
He was attached to the royal household for most of his adult life. That didn't mean that he was working in the court all the time, but that he was available for different kinds of missions. The fact that he was good at languages and diplomacy meant he was often sent to Europe to negotiate important marriages and peace treaties, for instance.

He then worked as a customs officer at the counting house at Wool Quay. It was a crucial job, because wool was England's only major export product in the late 14th century. It was the absolute heart of the nation's economy. And, later, he was clerk of the king's works, in charge of the infrastructure of buildings such as the king's palaces and the Tower of London.

We can see different phases of his life, in which he was influenced by different spaces and places. But it's interesting that, in all of them, his life was outward-facing. Even when he was sat in his office in London, he was looking out at the boats coming and going on the river, just as he had when he was a boy.

Did this outward-facing nature reflect the wider society of England at the time?
Absolutely. This was a period in which every educated man in England was multilingual. You had to know French and Latin as well as English. And it wasn't just men, either: lots of women would also have known French and English. Of course, this wasn't true of the average field labourer, many of whom were not literate. But the world in which Chaucer moved, certainly, was very outward-looking.

We only need to look at the queens at court during Chaucer's lifetime. [Edward III's wife] Philippa of Hainault, for instance, was from a county that's now split between Belgium and France; [Richard II's first wife] Anne of Bohemia was from what is now the Czech Republic. These queens brought their entourages and their cultures, which was key for Chaucer. His friends were all interested in high French culture and how it could be translated into an English environment.

Which of his journeys in Europe had the most impact upon him?
His trips to Italy in the 1370s were particularly important because they let him observe very

GETTY IMAGES

different ways of ordering society. He saw what it was like to live in a city-state run by an oligarchy rather than a monarchy, for instance. He also went to Lombardy, which was run by the Visconti tyrants, whose appalling absolutist behaviour was notorious.

Chaucer was very interested in these political models. But he also encountered Italian poetry, and devoured the work of Boccaccio, Petrarch and Dante. It was a crucial influence on him: a lot of the poetic forms that Chaucer developed derived from Italian poetic forms, for instance. It changed what he did in his own poetry, but also the wider English poetic form.

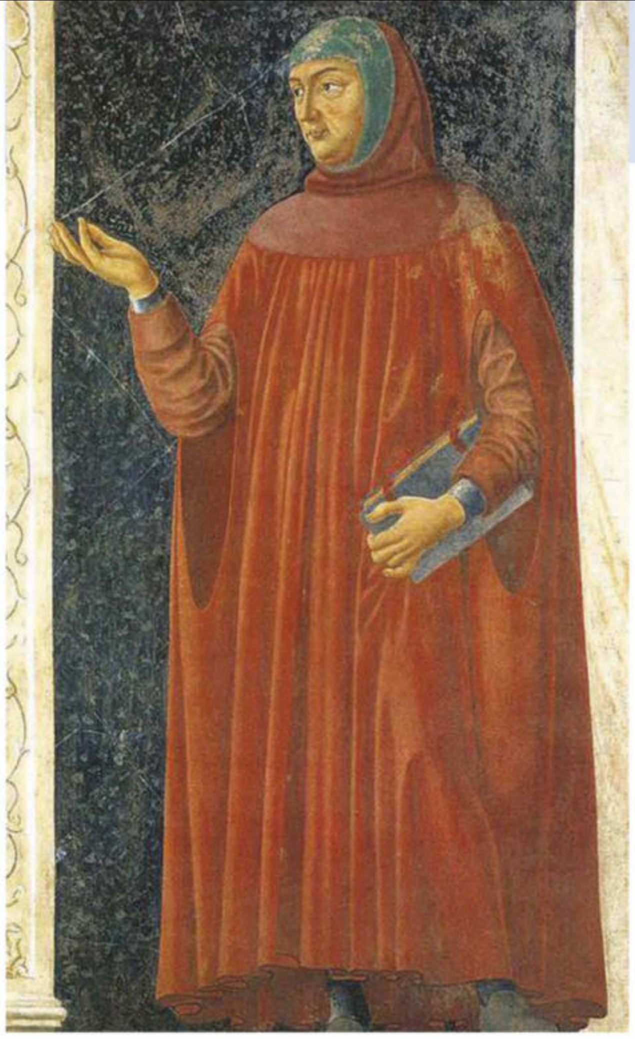
How did Chaucer become so influential?
Chaucer was respected and admired during his lifetime. He had good connections, key among them was [statesman and military leader] John of Gaunt, who was the most important man in England for many years. Chaucer worked for Gaunt in various ways – but, perhaps even more crucially, his sister-in-law was Gaunt's mistress and, later, wife. The fact that he held positions at court and came from a mercantile background also meant that he had access to a wide range of important people who were reading his work.

He was also extremely good. It may sound obvious, but the fact that he was a brilliant, interesting, innovative poet was very important. His work is incredibly diverse, too, which means that, whatever you like, you can find it in Chaucer. If you want a romance, you can find that; if you want to read a very rude, bawdy tale, you can find that too.

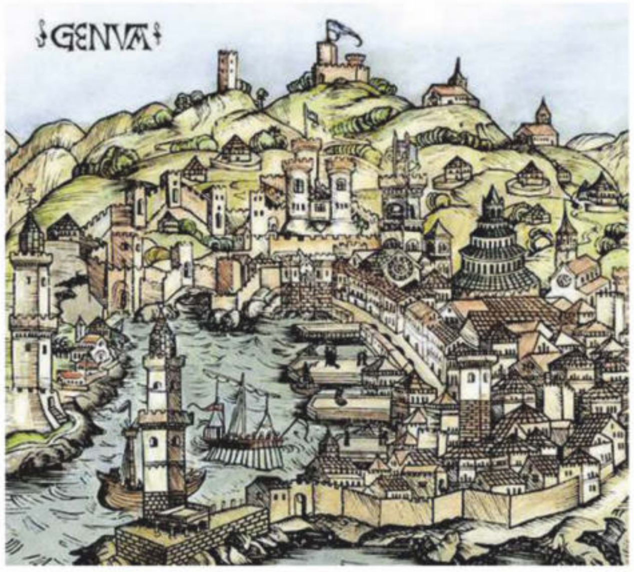
Yet he was not read by huge numbers of people in his own lifetime. It wasn't until the English language became increasingly important in the early 15th century that the new English poets began to promote him as 'Father Chaucer'. So this guy, who had been quite an edgy poet in many ways, became established as a kind of patriarchal figure.

Then, in the late 15th century, merchant and printmaker William Caxton printed *The Canterbury Tales*. Again, that was partly because it's an interesting, diverse work. But the fact that Chaucer was writing in what's known as the East Midland or London dialect was also important, because those were the kinds of texts that Caxton wanted to print. Other brilliant poems, such as *Gawain and the Green Knight*, were not printed until the 19th century – because it was in a northern dialect, and the north was left out of canonical English literature very early on.

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES



Italian influencer A c1450 fresco of Italian poet Francesco Petrarch, whose work "changed what Chaucer did with his own poetry", says Marion Turner



States of mind A 15th-century woodcut of Genoa. Trips to such city-states offered Chaucer the chance to see the different ways in which people lived

> **“Chaucer was one of those frustrating people who manage to hold down a day job *and* come home to write a book in the evening”**

To what extent were Chaucer's later years devoted to writing *The Canterbury Tales* – and how do the *Tales* reflect the fact that he had moved out of London by this point?
In the first half of the 1380s, Chaucer wrote a huge variety of texts, including his Dream Poetry and the epic romance *Troilus and Criseyde*. Although he did do some other things in the 1390s, he dedicated most of his time to *The Canterbury Tales*.

That's partly because he had more time. He had moved to Kent and, though he held various jobs, was probably less busy than he'd been at the Customs House. But, in truth, he was always a prolific writer – one of those frustrating people who manage to hold down a day job *and* come home to write a book in the evening. So the fact he devoted himself more exclusively to the *Tales* was probably because he had found what really suited him. Its very concept allowed Chaucer to write in different genres, styles and forms. Indeed, the key point of *The Canterbury Tales* is the idea of listening to stories from lots of different perspectives, which was new at the time.

What view should we have of Chaucer's place in the world – and in history?
I'd like people to realise how innovative the 14th century was. It's a surprisingly overlooked era, perhaps because people focus so much on the 16th century.

I would also like people to view Chaucer in this more innovative and outward-looking way, because the idea of him being the 'father of English literature' gives the impression he was a bit boring. People think that, because he's the head of the canon, he must be very serious – but, actually, he's incredibly funny.

I'd like people to think of him as a young man travelling around Europe, picking up manuscripts and then riding back to England to invent a new poetic form when he got back – all while wearing his interesting trousers. And I'd like them to see him as someone who lived a long life filled with new and different things right the way through it.

Interview by Matt Elton

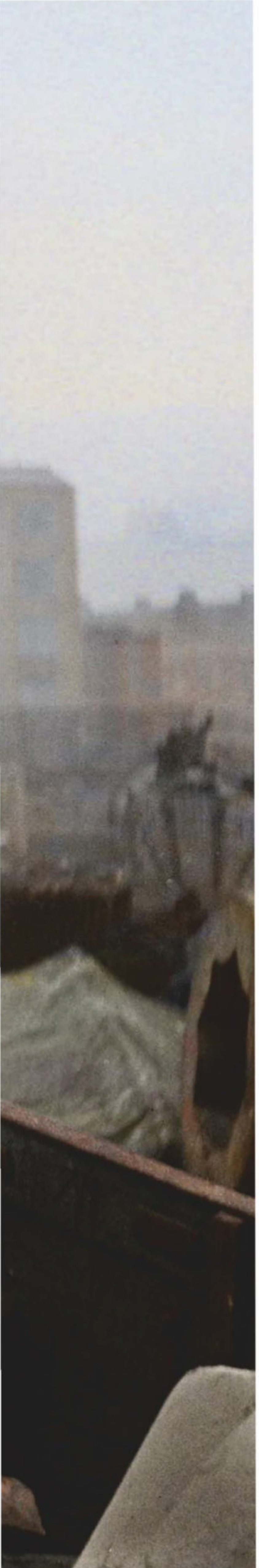
Marion Turner is associate professor in English at Jesus College, University of Oxford. Her latest book, *Chaucer: A European Life* (Princeton UP, 2019), is shortlisted for this year's Wolfson History Prize, the winner of which will be announced on 15 June

MORE FROM US You can listen to **Marion Turner discussing Chaucer** on our podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

Women load up scrap metal at a major steelworks, 1942. During the Second World War, the government opened hundreds of nurseries to encourage women into work but, as Britain returned to peace, most closed

Who’s holding the baby?

Since the turn of the 20th century, Britain’s working mothers have been faced with the ultimate juggling act: holding down a job while raising a family. **Helen McCarthy** traces women’s attempts to solve the childcare conundrum



GETTY IMAGES – COLOURISATION: JOHN GALLAGHER: MRJOHNGALLAGHER.COM

In the summer of 1947, the British government launched a patriotic appeal to the nation’s wives and mothers. War debts and the costs of rebuilding bomb-ravaged cities had sucked the life out of the country’s major export industries, from textiles and clothing to shoe, boot and hosiery production. Hospitals and schools were short on staff, while farmers had no one to harvest their crops. Only the married woman at home, ministers insisted, could restore economic prosperity by offering her labour. “In the next big effort,” one newspaper advert read, “you can be one of the women who turn the tide of recovery.”

A key question, however, was left unanswered: what would happen to the children of these selfless volunteers? The war nurseries, established after 1939 for use by munition workers, had closed their doors, while the expansion of nursery schools promised in the landmark 1944 Education Act was making little progress. After-school or holiday care for older children was practically non-existent. One mother from west London expressed her frustrations to the *Daily Mirror*: “Of all my many anxieties, the school holidays present the biggest problem. For six or seven weeks in summer, three at Easter, two at Christmas and one at Whitsun I am at my wits’ end to know what to do for my little girl, aged nine.”

Working mothers everywhere felt her pain. Throughout the 20th century, women’s choices concerning paid work – where to do it, when to do it, whether to do it at all – were shaped by the options available for the care of children. Mothers sought employment for many reasons: to feed their families, to enjoy a higher standard of living, to get a break from the housework, or to pursue a career.

But whatever a woman’s motive, the problem of childcare had to be faced – and it was largely faced by her alone. Neither government nor employers saw it as their responsibility to help working mothers balance their double job except at times of national emergency, such as war. Fathers became more active in the home over time, but the burden of childcare – either doing it or organising it – continued to fall largely on women’s shoulders.

Children underfoot

Was it always this way? In pre-industrial times, care-giving was considered a female domain but it blended more easily with the economic rhythms of the household. Spinning, baking and brewing, running a shop or working the land were not incompatible with nursing babies or supervising children. What’s more, extended kin, servants and lodgers could often lend a hand.

Home-based production of this kind did not entirely disappear with the coming of the factories in the 19th century. Many mothers solved the childcare problem by overseeing family businesses or securing waged work that they could do in or close to their place of dwelling. A great deal of home-work was performed by women with babies or toddlers underfoot, from taking in washing or cleaning for neighbours to finishing trousers, mending sacks and assembling matchboxes, often on exploitatively low piece-rates set by local factory-owners.

Cleaning was another job popular with mothers caring for small children during the day. One man who grew up in Leeds after the Second World War recalled how he accompanied his mother to her weekly cleaning job in a large private house: “I had to sit on the step outside and if it was raining I was allowed to sit next to the bins where there was a sort of lean-to-shelter. When mum had finished she would call me inside where I would sit, without a word being spoken, and have a cup of tea, a piece of brown bread and cheese, followed by a thin sliver of fruit cake."

These sorts of ad hoc solutions persisted into the later 20th century. One 1980 study estimated that 15–20 per cent of wage-earning mothers took their children with them to work rather than paying for care. New technologies connecting home and workplace seemed to promise greater flexibility for mothers doing higher-level professional jobs. Yet answering phone-calls or drafting reports for your boss against a backdrop of wailing babies and demanding toddlers was hardly a recipe for career success.

Nannies and minders

A privileged minority of women could always rely on paid help to ease the load. Until the mid-20th century, middle and upper-class families routinely employed nursemaids and nannies and sent older children to boarding schools. Most wives used their spare time for leisure or voluntary work, but some seized the opportunity to pursue professional vocations. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, for instance, gave birth to three children in the 1870s but continued to practise medicine from her private consulting rooms in Marylebone. Her contemporary, the writer Alice Meynell, produced large volumes of poetry, essays and reviews from her smart London home while bringing up eight children, to whom she was known as the "pencilling mama".

In the 1930s, the crystallographer and future Nobel laureate Dorothy Hodgkin persuaded Somerville College, Oxford to provide her with paid maternity leave after the birth of her first child and to repeat the experiment for her subsequent pregnancies.

Private incomes or ample salaries enabled these mothers to pay others to look after their children, a pattern that was embraced by high-flying professionals long after the decline of residential domestic service. Margaret Thatcher had a long-serving nanny who looked after her young twins while she climbed the greasy pole of politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Her contemporary, the barrister Barbara Mills, hired no fewer than five nannies to care for her four children as she made her way in the world of law. "Any working mother *must* have competent and reliable domestic help, and be prepared for emergencies," Thatcher remarked in an interview. "You must have a nanny who can change a wheel and mend a washing machine, someone who has practical brains," was Mills' advice.

A cheaper option was to engage an au pair, who became a familiar presence in the middle-class household. These young European women spent a year in the UK attending language classes and living with an English family, receiving free bed and board in return for helping with children and light household chores. In practice, the au pair's ill-defined status, somewhere between a house guest and servant, created tensions and misunderstandings. One mother complained that her au pair was "exceedingly extravagant with hot water, heat, electricity, and everything else including the telephone", but she felt unable to reprimand her "like you can your own family, because the au pair leaves you".

Journalist Shirley Conran found the annual churn of arriving and departing au pairs too great a strain. She decided instead to

A woman makes matchboxes in London's East End, c1907, at a time when thousands of working-class mothers worked from home with "babies and toddlers underfoot"

Dorothy Hodgkin with her children in 1946. The future Nobel laureate persuaded Somerville College to provide her with paid maternity leave

"Any working mother *must* have competent and reliable domestic help," observed Margaret Thatcher

MARY EVANS/OXFORD AND COUNTY NEWSPAPERS/GETTY IMAGES

Nursemaids push prams in a London park, 1916. Nannies, nursemaids and boarding schools were the preserve of the wealthy

teach her children to cook and, with the money saved, to buy a fridge-freezer and dishwasher, neither of which, she observed, were "likely to have an affair with my husband".

These private childcare solutions lay well beyond the budget of most working mothers. Middle-class women were accustomed to employing people in their homes, but working-class mothers were more likely to leave babies with relatives or pay trusted neighbours to mind their children while at work.

This was the well-established pattern in Lancashire, where mothers had found skilled employment in textiles mills since the early 19th century. The suffragist Ada Nield Chew recalled how two cotton-weavers of her acquaintance carried their sleepy-eyed children every morning to a minder who lived a few streets away in a house which was "an exact replica" of their own. The mother collected and fed the older boy during the dinner hour and called for both children on her way home from the factory, buying fish and chips for the family's supper. The rest of the evening was spent polishing the grate, scrubbing the kitchen floor and getting the children bathed and into bed.

Grandmothers were a crucial source of childcare in working-class communities. The housewives studied by Pearl Jephcott in Bermondsey in south London in the 1950s leant heavily on their mothers while they worked part-time shifts in local factories. Jephcott described granny as "the minder-in-chief". Sometimes daughters would pay or offer services in return, such as picking up shopping or cooking hot meals.

These reciprocal arrangements were replicated in some multi-generational south-Asian households. Harbhanan, a Punjabi migrant from east Africa who moved to London in the 1960s, was able to continue working as a machinist for a clothing manufacturer thanks to the childcare provided by her resident mother-in-law.

The ties of kin were not unbreakable, particularly as families became more geographically dispersed and older women were themselves more likely to be back at work. Some grandmothers admitted bluntly that they did not want the burden of caring for small children and were looking forward to a rest in later life. In the late 1950s, a Bethnal Green woman complained about the noisy demands of her grown-up daughters, who came to her "with all their troubles", including requests for baby-minding: "I say when they're married, they've got to look after themselves. They've made their bed and they've got to lie on it."

Later in the century, taking on regular childcare duties held even less appeal to well-off baby-boomers eyeing up the alternative attractions of retirement, from adventurous travel to part-time degrees.

Comprehensive failure

Informal, family-based care dominated the childcare landscape for so long because the chief alternative – well-run and affordable day nurseries – was so hard to find. Unlike countries such as France or Sweden, Britain did not develop a comprehensive system of state-funded pre-school provision. Efforts were made in wartime to lure mothers into essential industries with the promise of nursery places, but these were strictly temporary measures.

The number of local authority nursery places fell across the postwar decades, with only one place provided for every 30 children in the under-five age group by 1977.

Priority was given to groups deemed to have special needs, such as unmarried

GETTY IMAGES

TIMELINE
The challenges of childcare

1907
Officials estimate that 450,000 people, mostly women, are **wage-earning at home** in England and Wales, although the true number is likely to be much higher

First World War
Government funds **day nurseries for use by mothers working in munitions,** providing a total of 7,000 places

Second World War
Government scales up nursery provision, which reaches a total of 72,000 full-time and 138,000 part-time places by 1943

1945
The war nurseries close. With a view to restoring family life, official policy becomes "to **discourage mothers of children under two from going out to work**"

1947
The government launches the Women in Industry campaign but, without nursery provision, **mothers overwhelmingly register for part-time** rather than full-time work

1948
Legislation passes to introduce **tougher regulation and inspection of child-minders**, but with no training or investment offered to those working in the sector

1953
John Bowlby publishes *Child Care and the Growth of Love*, **warning against the separation of mothers and infants**

1967
The Plowden Report recommends the expansion of nursery schools with a strict educational remit, **not for use as daycare by working mothers**

1970
The first national Women's Liberation conference adopts **24-hour nurseries as one of its four demands**

1998
New Labour launches the **National Childcare Strategy.** Soon, 40 per cent of under-twos are in formal childcare

A child plays while a mother works in a staff training room, Manchester, 1966

NURSERY CAMPAIGN
HACKNEY TRADES COUNCIL
MORE NURSERIES
PARENTS MUST UNITE + FIGHT
A NURSERY IS MY RIGHT

Protesters march for better nursery provision, Hackney, 1975. By now, a coalition of feminists, trade unions and childcare experts was calling for government action

Children play in a Northamptonshire nursery school, c1940s. The supply of childcare places failed to meet demand then – and that remains the case today, argues Helen McCarthy

mothers or so-called ‘problem’ families, whereas the ordinary working mother was expected to make her own arrangements. As one local health official put it: “If the career mother wishes to park out her child for a substantial proportion of the day… she should at least be asked to pay the full cost, and should not expect the state or the municipality to subsidise her.”

The maternal presence

The conviction that childcare was no business of the state found an ally in the rise of a new consensus around infants’ emotional needs. In the late 1940s, popular psychoanalysts like John Bowlby and Donald Winnicott told parents that children required a continuous maternal presence in early life if they were to develop into well-adjusted adults. “The ordinary good mother knows without being told that during this time nothing must interfere with the continuity of the relationship between the child and herself,” Winnicott warned in his regular radio broadcasts.

Looked at this way, nurseries were undesirable institutions because they enforced separation. This message was driven home in 1956 by the magazine *Picture Post*, which illustrated a long feature on working mothers with an image of a forlorn-looking toddler, pictured behind the bars of his nursery cot.

By the 1970s and 80s, these attitudes were being challenged by a vociferous lobby of feminists, trade unionists and childcare experts. They argued that nurseries were a social priority, essential, as the book *Nurseries Now* put it, “to ending sex discrimination and promoting equal opportunities”.

One magazine ran an image of a forlorn-looking toddler, pictured behind the bars of his nursery cot

Women employed in large corporations put pressure on employers to step up. At the BBC, a group of senior female managers campaigned for the establishment of a workplace crèche, arguing that “a forward-thinking employer with positive policies for the welfare of its staff would be able to see the increasing need for nursery provision and act on that need”.

Such demands fell on deaf ears amid the public spending cuts and deregulatory policies introduced by the Conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major. Some change came in 1998 with New Labour’s National Childcare Strategy, designed to expand capacity within Britain’s creaking childcare system. A mixture of grants, tax credits and vouchers yielded impressive results, with the proportion of under-twos in formal childcare rising from a quarter to nearly 40 per cent over the next decade, and take-up of subsidised places for three and four-year-olds running at more than 80 per cent.

Yet too many mothers have still had to battle to find good quality nursery care – at a cost they can afford. Critics argue that recent moves to extend the free places have been woefully under-funded, as many childcare providers struggle to meet parental demand while paying their staff a decent wage.

Back in 1947, when the British government tried to rally housewives behind its Women in Industry campaign, it met with an unambiguous response. Mothers were not prepared to undertake strenuous, full-time factory work if the state was not prepared to help solve the childcare problem. The *Daily Mirror* took up their cause, paying tribute to the thousands of public-spirited women who, like the anxious correspondent from west London, would gladly answer the call “IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD LET THEM”. Such mothers, the newspaper observed, “ask so little – somewhere to leave their children where they know they will be well looked after”. This, it appeared, was asking too much in the late 1940s. Seventy years on, working mothers are still asking. H

Helen McCarthy is lecturer in modern British history at the University of Cambridge. Her book *Double Lives: A History of Working Motherhood* was published by Bloomsbury in April

MORE FROM US Helen McCarthy will be discussing **working mothers** on our podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

BISHOPSGATE INSTITUTE-HACKNEY FLASHERS

History
Extra
Podcast

Best
Specialist
Podcast

THE PUBLISHER PODCAST
AWARDS
POWERED BY dax

Voices of the past

HistoryExtra
Podcast

The award-winning HistoryExtra podcast, from *BBC History Magazine,* is released up to five times a week. It features interviews with world-leading experts on topics spanning ancient history through to the world wars and beyond. Why not check it out today, and explore our archive of more than 700 previous episodes.

Download episodes **for free** from iTunes and other providers, or via **historyextra.com/podcast**

A medieval king… as you've never seen him before

The inner workings of Henry III's mind are laid bare in a unique collection of letters that have survived from the 13th century. **David Carpenter,** who has written a major new biography on Henry, presents seven insights that these documents give us into the king

A gilt-bronze effigy of Henry III in what is his greatest legacy, Westminster Abbey

ALAMY

King Henry III of England, the son of King John, was a monarch in a new age. He was the first to confront the restrictions of Magna Carta, the power of parliament and a rising tide of English national feeling. He also began his reign bereft of Normandy and Anjou: the first held by his predecessors since 1066; the second since 1154.

If Henry's situation was different to that of his ancestors, so was his reaction. The depth of his piety, centring on his devotion to Saint Edward the Confessor, set him apart from all his predecessors. Fortunately, thanks to the richness of the source material, we know more about his daily conduct than that of any other medieval monarch.

Henry was nine in 1216 when he came to the throne; 65 on his death in 1272. That's a reign of 56 years. In some ways, he was the ideal king for the Magna Carta age. He was warmhearted and accessible. His rule was totally unlike that of his hard-driving, spiky father. John's conduct had provoked a barons' rebellion in 1215 and the concession of Magna Carta. Henry's brought years of peace, a blessing for which he was widely praised.

Building on the peace

Henry's peace provided the framework for an explosion in the money supply and a new commercial network of markets and fairs. It facilitated the preaching of the friars, the pastoral work of bishops and the building of cathedrals. The whole of Salisbury Cathedral (other than the spire) is a work of Henry's reign, as are important parts of Worcester, Lincoln, Ely and Hereford cathedrals.

Internal peace was linked to the absence of external war. His campaigns in Wales were last resorts, and he lived in peace with the king of Scotland. Indeed in 1237, he settled his quarrels with the Scots in a statesmanlike treaty. While Henry wished to recover his lost continental empire, he only mounted two brief (and totally unsuccessful) campaigns to do so. In 1259, he made peace with Louis IX of France.

Where John had been reviled for his impiety, Henry was revered as a 'rex Christianissimus', 'a most Christian king'. He was famous for attending masses and giving alms to the poor. In the 1240s he was feeding 500 paupers daily at court. On 13 October 1260 (the feast day of Edward the Confessor), 5,016 paupers crammed into Westminster Hall.

It was in the 1230s, influenced by the monks of Westminster Abbey, where Edward the Confessor was buried, that Henry adopted the Confessor as his patron saint. From then on the cult was central to his being. He hoped the Confessor would both support him in this life, and secure his safe passage to the next. Henry's devotion was something entirely new. Its visible sign today is Westminster Abbey, which Henry rebuilt in the Confessor's honour.

Unfortunately, for all the respect for his piety, for all his investment in 'soft power', Henry's rule became increasingly unpopular. The problem, as contemporaries saw it, lay in his naivety and incompetence. Henry was certainly ambitious but he found it hard to judge what was practical and what was not. His delight in giving was easily exploited by grasping ministers and flattering favourites.

The amount of patronage Henry gave to his foreign relatives placed him at odds with the Englishness of his subjects. His madcap scheme to place a son on the throne of Sicily infuriated churchmen (they had to stump up the money). In the end, a political revolution in 1258 stripped Henry of power and placed government in the hands of a baronial council responsible to parliament. Henry's struggles to break free led to a civil war, his capture at the battle of Lewes in 1264, and more than a year in which England was effectively ruled by Simon de Montfort. Even after Montfort's defeat and death in August 1265, at the battle of Evesham, it was two years before peace returned to England.

Henry owed much of his victory to his son, the future Edward I, but his reputation as a good and pious man was also important.

Henry died in 1272, his authority intact, his kingdom at peace. His new abbey at Westminster had been consecrated three years before and there he was buried close to the Confessor's shrine.

How then do we know so much about Henry? The answer lies in his letters. These were written for him by the clerks of an office, travelling with the king, called the chancery. Few of the original letters survive but fortunately the chancery kept copies on parchment rolls (new ones were opened for each regnal year) and these survive in the National Archives at Kew. In 1250–51 alone, the rolls contain nearly 4,000 items of business.

If many letters are routine, others are personal to the king and probably dictated by him. They give a wonderful picture of his character and conduct, his mores and motivations. It is a picture lacking for Henry's predecessors in the 12th century, for whom such rolls do not survive. It is equally lacking for his successors because the chancery ceased to travel with the king and its rolls no longer recorded his personal orders. As the seven examples on the following pages prove, the rolls offer us a unique insight into the mind of a medieval king…

1

The connoisseur

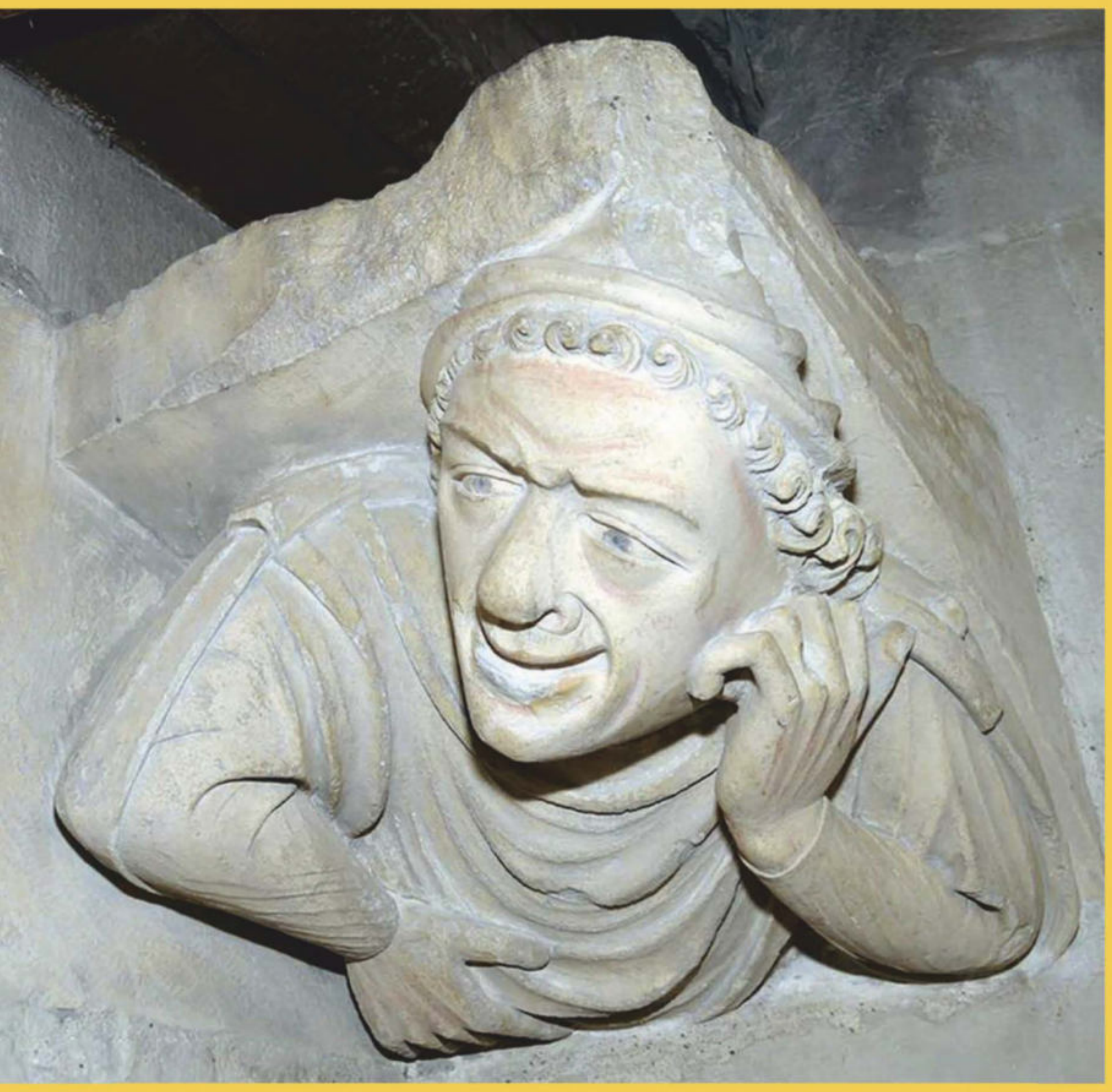
Statements in art and architecture were central to Henry's kingship

So much of Henry's personality stands out in his orders on the chancery rolls for the construction and embellishment of his homes. New halls, chapels and chambers are to be completed in time for his arrival, no expense spared, "even if a thousand workers have to labour night and day".

Henry also had a discerning eye for detail. He was fully in tune with the new emphasis in the visual arts on the expression of emotion.

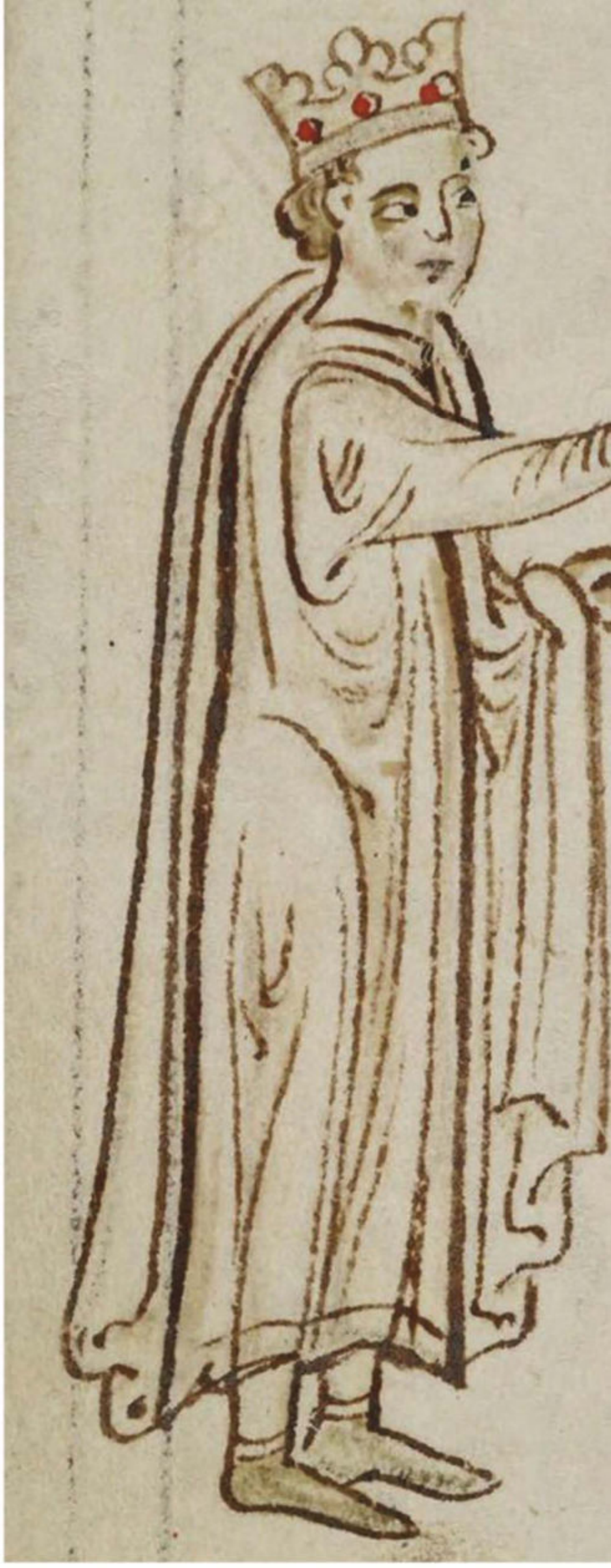
The cherubims painted in the church of St Peter at the Tower of London were to look "cheerful and joyous". The figure of winter painted above the fireplace of the queen's chamber at Westminster "by its sad looks and miserable portrayals of the body" was to be "justly likened to winter".

Henry was always thinking of ways to enhance the outward show and dignity of his kingship. He wanted a new porch to be constructed at Westminster so that he could dismount from his horse "before a noble frontage". He also wanted the leopards beneath his throne in Westminster Hall to be made of bronze rather than marble because he had been told they would be more "sumptuous" that way.



This image of a craftsman, carved into the triforium of Westminster Abbey, exemplifies the lifelike, 'expressive' style favoured by Henry III. The king's own writings reveal his great passion for grand building projects

DEAN AND CHAPTER OF WESTMINSTER/GETTY IMAGES



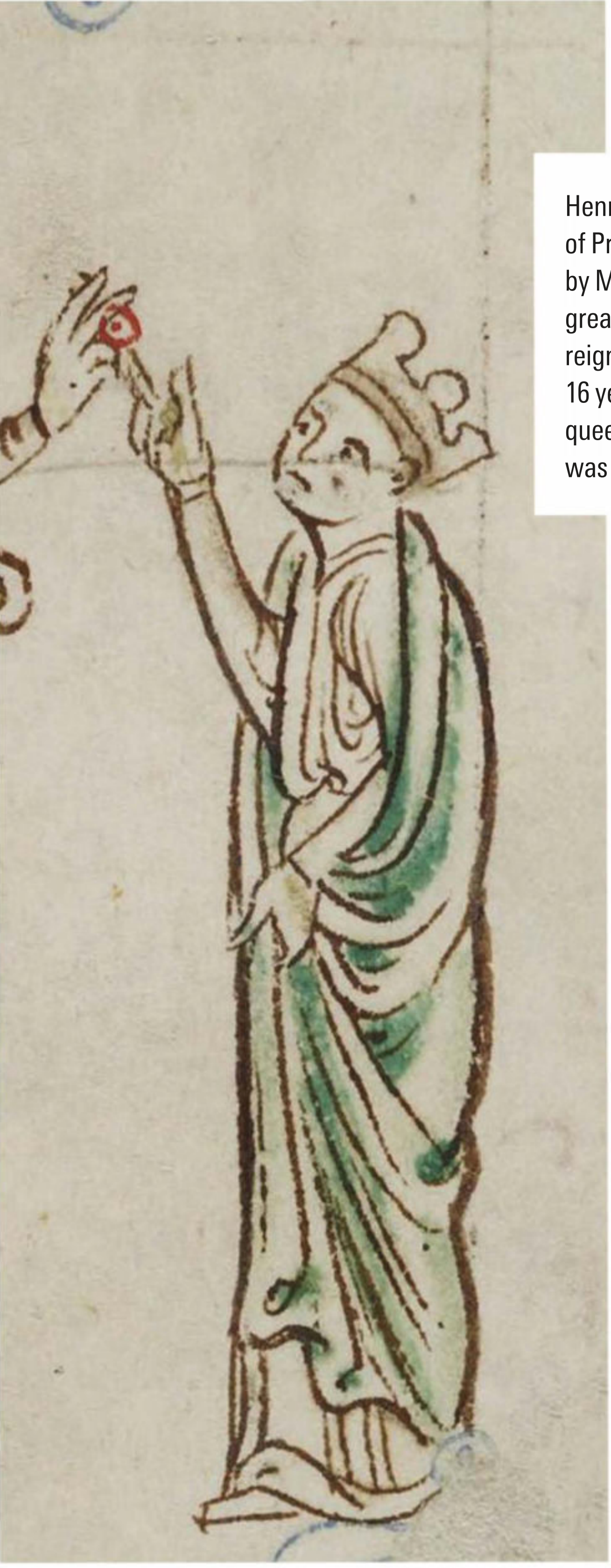
2

The doting

Henry discovered that was not as malleable

In 1236, Henry married Eleanor of Provence. She was 12 and he was 28. Henry was entranced by his new wife. As his letters show, he poured money into building chambers and chapels for her at his major residences. He also showered her with gifts. Her present for the Christmas of 1240 was a cup of gold, enamelled inside, with a foot on which to stand. It was worth more than £13, not far short of the annual income of a knight. Craftsmen were to work day and night "so that the queen can drink from it at the foresaid feast… and so that both king and queen can then be content".

The strength of Henry and Eleanor's marriage was shown in the robes, cut from the same cloth, they wore at great feasts. Covered passages connected



Henry III marries Eleanor of Provence, as depicted by Matthew Paris, the great chronicler of Henry's reign. The king was 16 years older than his queen but found that she was no push-over

BRIDGEMAN

husband

his young wife
as he thought

their chambers, so that they could go to and fro with dry feet. In 1238, at Woodstock Palace in Oxfordshire, Henry escaped an assassination attempt because he was sleeping in the queen's chamber not his own.

Given the difference in age, Eleanor was very much Henry's to mould but she proved by far the stronger character. With her position secure – having produced two healthy sons – she vigorously promoted the interests of her uncles from Savoy and quarrelled bitterly with the second group of foreigners Henry established in England – his own half-brothers from Poitou. She played a greater part in politics than any queen since the Norman Conquest, Eleanor of Aquitaine excepted.

MORE FROM US

You can listen to **David Carpenter discuss Henry III** on our podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

3

The prankster

The king loved playing practical jokes – often at his servants' expense

It is often difficult to know when medieval kings were trying to be funny. Fortunately, in Henry's case, an entry on a chancery roll states specifically that he was playing a joke. In a ship coming home from Gascony in 1243, Henry ordered to be entered on the roll a whole series of invented debts that his clerk, Peter the Poitevin, had supposedly incurred. The idea was for Peter to look at the roll and, to the king's amusement, wonder what on Earth was going on. Henry, however, didn't want the joke to go too far (he had no desire for the debts to become official), so he ordered the entry to be crossed out when Peter wasn't looking.

Henry was almost certainly joking when he issued a pompous letters-patent giving another clerk full power to cut his fellows' long and curly hair. If the clerk failed in his task, he was threatened with having his own locks cut by Henry himself.

Some of Henry's humour was of a more slapstick variety. When he visited the Roman bath at Bath, he ordered his jester to be thrown in. We know this from the letter Henry issued giving the jester a new suit of clothes to replace the ones ruined by the ducking!

4

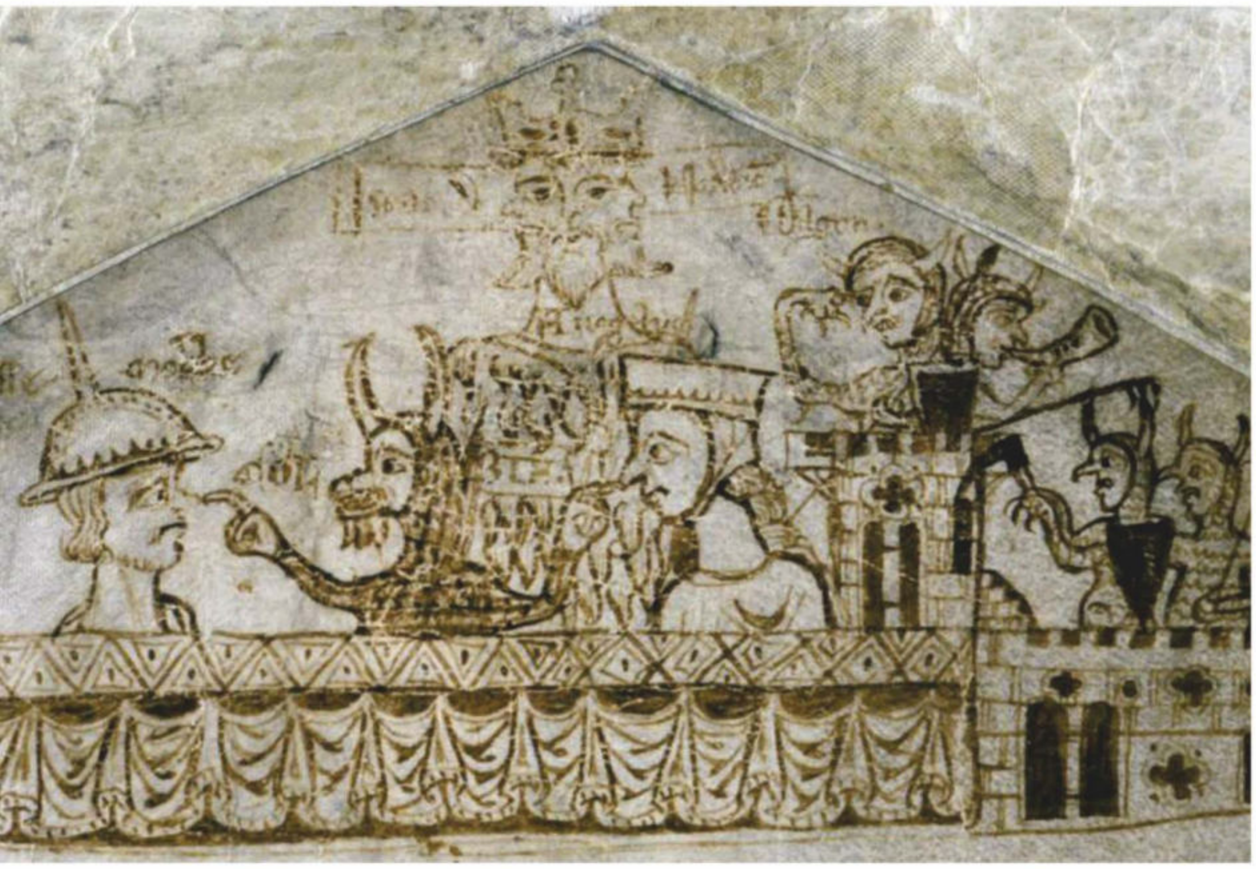
The home bird

Henry preferred a comfortable life over one lived at high speed

All the royal letters on the chancery rolls end with their place and date of issue. Given their frequency, we know where Henry was on most days of his reign.

King John had travelled around his dominions at breakneck speed, rarely spending more than two or three days at any one place. Henry was quite different. He craved the comfortable life. At his favourite castles and palaces in the south, he often stayed for weeks, sometimes months. Windsor, Guildford, Winchester, Marlborough, Clarendon and Woodstock (the furthest north) absorbed nearly 40 per cent of his time. Another 30 per cent was spent at Westminster, easily his top residence. This was only partly because Westminster was the seat of government, the home of the exchequer and the court of common pleas. Much more important for Henry was its proximity to Westminster Abbey and thus to the shrine of his patron saint.

King John, shown sealing Magna Carta, was a restless monarch, unlike his more sedentary son



From a roll of 1233 recording taxation returns, this drawing is emblematic of attitudes to the Jews in Henry's reign. It depicts the wealthy Jew, Isaac of Norwich, as a three-faced devil, while beneath him devils torment his male and female assistants

5

The persecutor

There was a dark side to the warmhearted man of peace

An important aspect of Henry's piety – applauded then, abhorrent now – was his treatment of the Jews. He was the first medieval king to attempt, on any significant scale, their conversion to Christianity. In 1232, in what is now London's Chancery Lane, Henry established a house where converts could live, learn and worship as part of a community.

Henry's letters show his commitment to the cause. He ordered the London house to admit Philip "who has been converted and baptised in our presence at Reading". Having heard that a cleric, writing a book about conversion, needed a Jew to help with the work, he readily gave his permission. When there was dispute over whether the children of a convert wished to convert, too, Henry ordered them to be placed before their father so they could decide for themselves whether or not "to remain in their error". Conversions were thus supposed to be genuine but many Jews must have embraced Christianity to avoid persecution.

That persecution was partly financial, for Henry's exactions destroyed the wealth of the Jewish community. But it was also religious. Henry was the first king to sanction the belief that, in a macabre parody of Christ's crucifixion, they captured and crucified little Christian boys. When such a crime was thought to have been committed in Lincoln, the king descended on the town and, ultimately, 19 Jews were executed. Henry was laying the foundations for the Jewish community's expulsion from England at the hands of his son, Edward I, in 1290.

6

The madcap diplomat

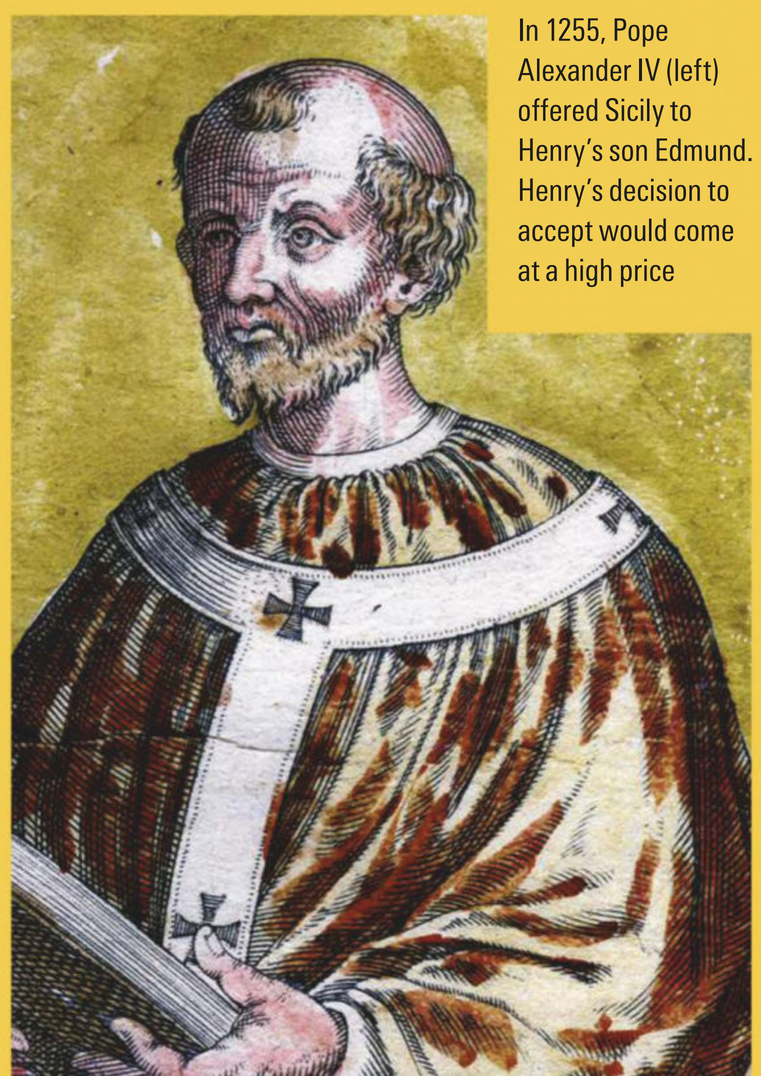
During Henry's reign, blind faith often won out over realpolitik

Nothing exemplified better Henry's naivety than the Sicilian affair. The throne of Sicily was theoretically the pope's to bestow, and in 1255 Pope Alexander conceded it to Edmund, Henry's 10-year-old second son. For Henry the prize seemed great, for Sicily was a wealthy kingdom. Having lost his continental empire, the king could now establish his dynasty as a Mediterranean power.

But Sicily was falling under the control of Manfred, son of the late Emperor Frederick II, and a military campaign would be needed to oust him. Henry also had to find large sums of money for the pope in return for the offer of the kingdom. Parliament, as Henry acknowledged in a letter, thought the project "not merely difficult but nearly impossible". But Henry pressed on anyway – and his reasons for doing so reveal his core beliefs. "We did not wish to abandon what we had begun, directing our eyes to the king of heaven and ruler of the constellations, who is able to command sea and wind, bring tranquillity where there is disturbance, and convert darkness into light."

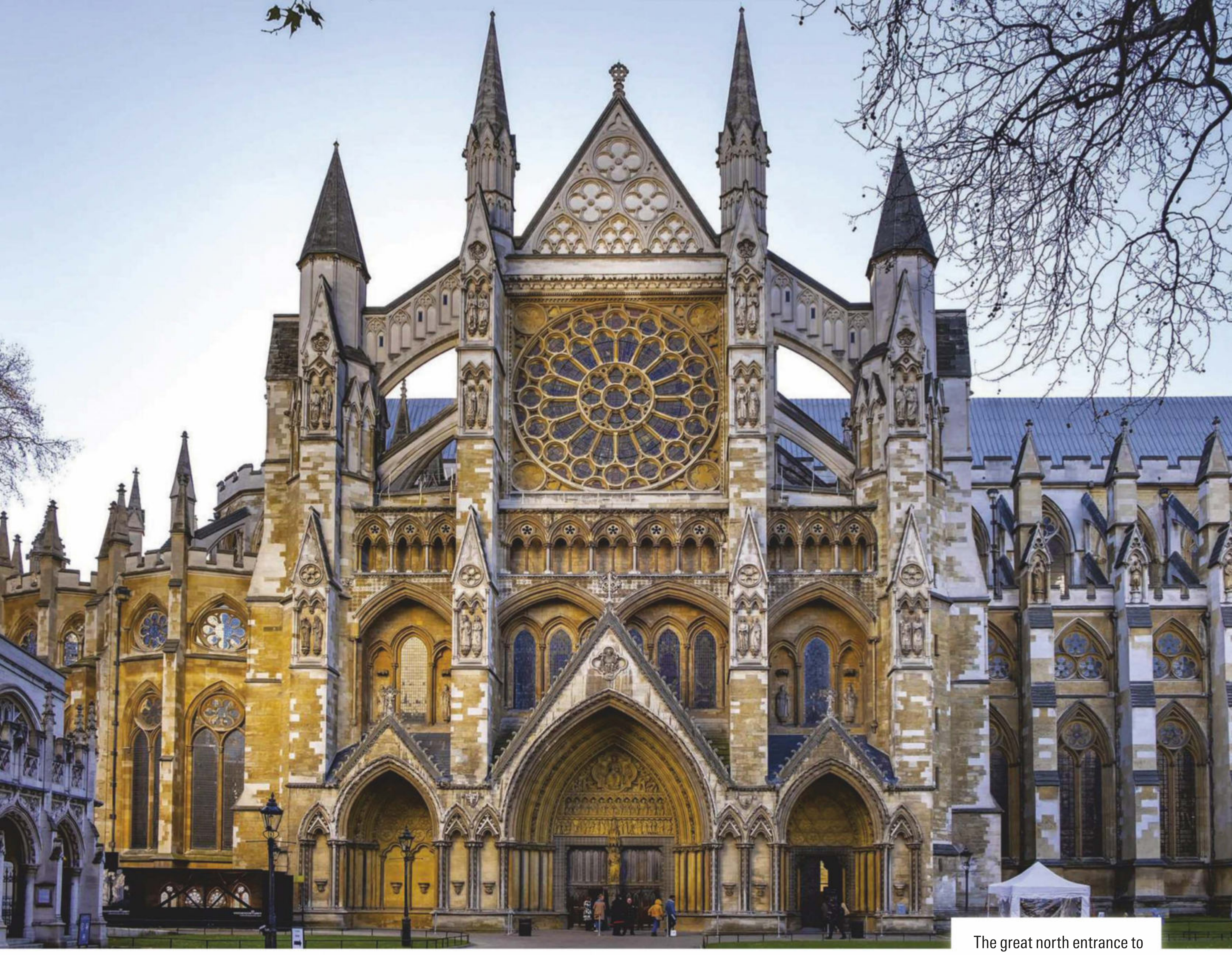
On the day he sealed the deal, Henry made a magnificent offering to the Confessor's shrine, "for Edmund, son of the king, that God shall give a happy outcome to his Sicilian enterprise".

But God did not. Parliament refused to give Henry the money needed to send an army to Sicily. Realising Henry's powerlessness, the pope cancelled the whole deal. Edmund never became king of Sicily.



In 1255, Pope Alexander IV (left) offered Sicily to Henry's son Edmund. Henry's decision to accept would come at a high price

NATIONAL ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES



The great north entrance to Westminster Abbey. This was heavily restored in the 19th century but it still conveys the grandeur of Henry's design, stunningly different from anything else in England at the time

7

The devotee

Henry's obsession with an Anglo-Saxon predecessor produced one of western Europe's great churches

Henry's aim in rebuilding Westminster Abbey was to win the favour of Edward the Confessor by creating a church of unique splendour. He also sought somewhere fit for the crowning of kings (the abbey had been the site of all coronations since 1066). The new church breathes Henry's generous, expansive spirit. Its great internal height, the form of its windows, its rounded east end, its radiating chapels, and great north door were unlike anything seen before in England. If the new French cathedrals (from which key features of the design derived) reached still higher, Henry's church, with its profusion of purbeck marble and its sculptured roses, was much more highly decorated.

Henry drove forward the work in a series of passionate orders preserved on the chancery rolls: he wanted to find 600–800 men at work on his next visit to the abbey, so that progress could be "greatly speeded up". All the marble columns were to be raised before winter – and, to prevent workmen deserting for lack of pay, money was to be found from all possible sources.

The great abbey rising above their heads did not stop the barons marching into Westminster Hall in 1258 and bringing Henry's personal rule to an end. But the chronicler Thomas Wykes, who attended the new church's consecration in 1269, said it exceeded in beauty all other churches in the world. It is Henry's enduring legacy. H

David Carpenter is professor of medieval history at King's College London. His latest book, *Henry III: The Rise to Power and Personal Rule, 1207 1258*, was published in May by Yale

DREAMSTIME

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

Save when you subscribe
to the digital edition

20
HILARY MANTEL ON CR
"The next crisis is never m
HiST
BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE
History's G
MYSTE
Surviving the Great Plague
The crusaders' Muslim allies
BBC
CHARLES DICKENS' WAR ON POVERTY
HiSTORY
MAGAZINE
BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE
£5.50 / July 2020 / www.historyextra.com
HENRY VIII
THE GREATEST SHOWMAN
How the Tudor king partied for peace at the Field of the Cloth of Gold
Why we forgot the Korean War
Who's holding the baby?
The challenges of childcare in the 20th century
MEDIEVAL MAGIC
HiSTORY
VICTORY
Why the Allies triumphed in WW2
TUTANKHAMUN UNMASKED
Viking Britain
Anne Boleyn
DEADLY RIVALS
Victorian slum life
ENGLAND'S BLOODY REFORMATION
Shakespeare's radical vision
The PRINCES in the TOWER
Cromw
THE CELTS
Why did the peasants really revolt?
11 November 1918

Available from

GET IT ON
Google play

zinio™

amazon apps
Available on
kindle fire

BBC History Magazine is Britain's bestselling history magazine. We feature leading historians writing lively and thought-provoking new takes on the great events of the past.

HOW WE FORGOT THE KOREAN WAR
BBC
CHARLES DICKENS' WAR ON POVERTY
HISTORY
HENRY VIII
THE GREATEST SHOWMAN
Why we forgot the Korean War

When conflict erupted on the Korean peninsula 70 years ago, many Britons feared the worst, anticipating a return to conscription and air-raids. So why, asks **Grace Huxford**, did anxiety soon turn into apathy – and why has that sentiment dominated British attitudes to the war ever since?

Enjoy our Premium App experience now available from

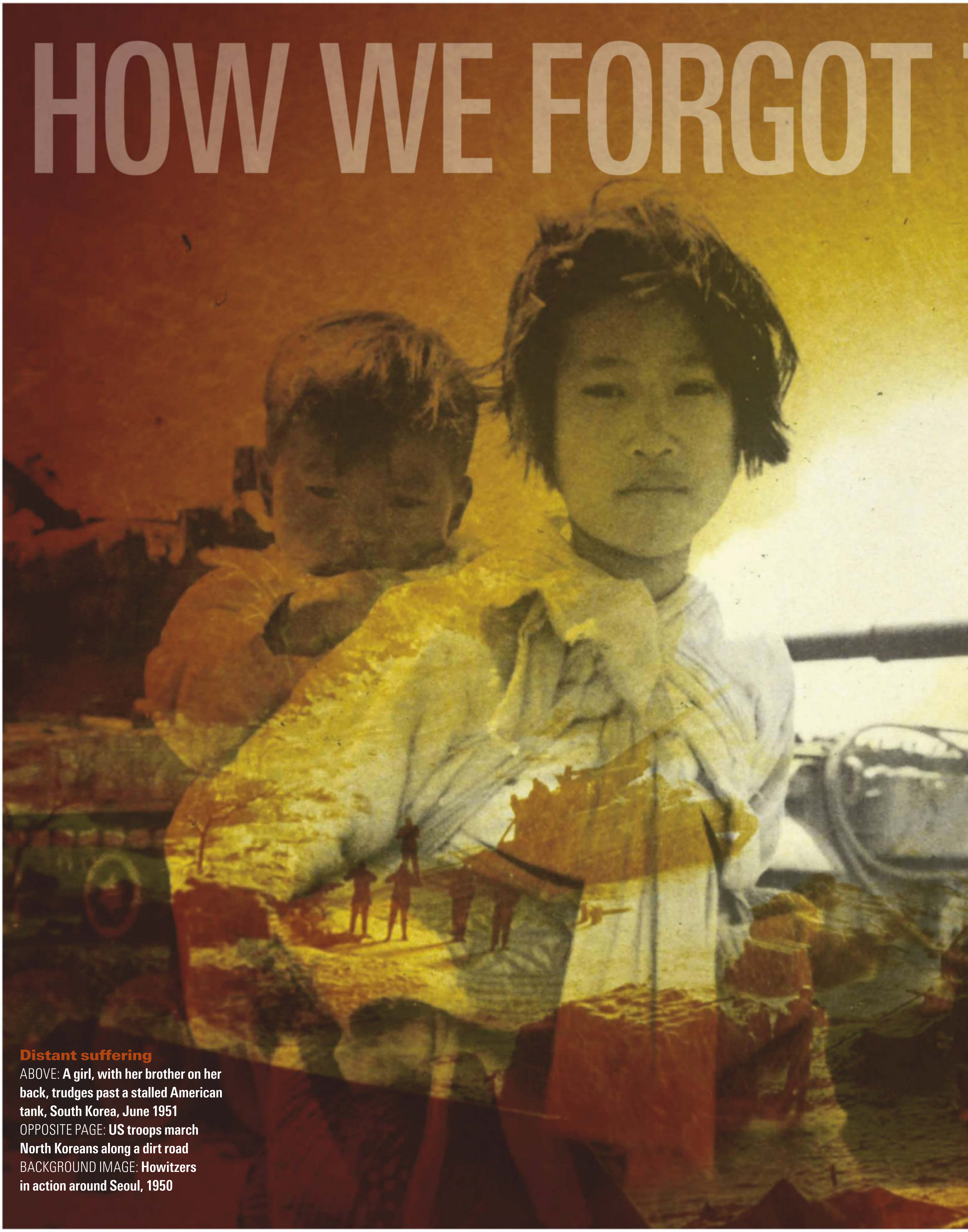
GET IT ON Google play

zinio™

amazon apps Available on kindle fire

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

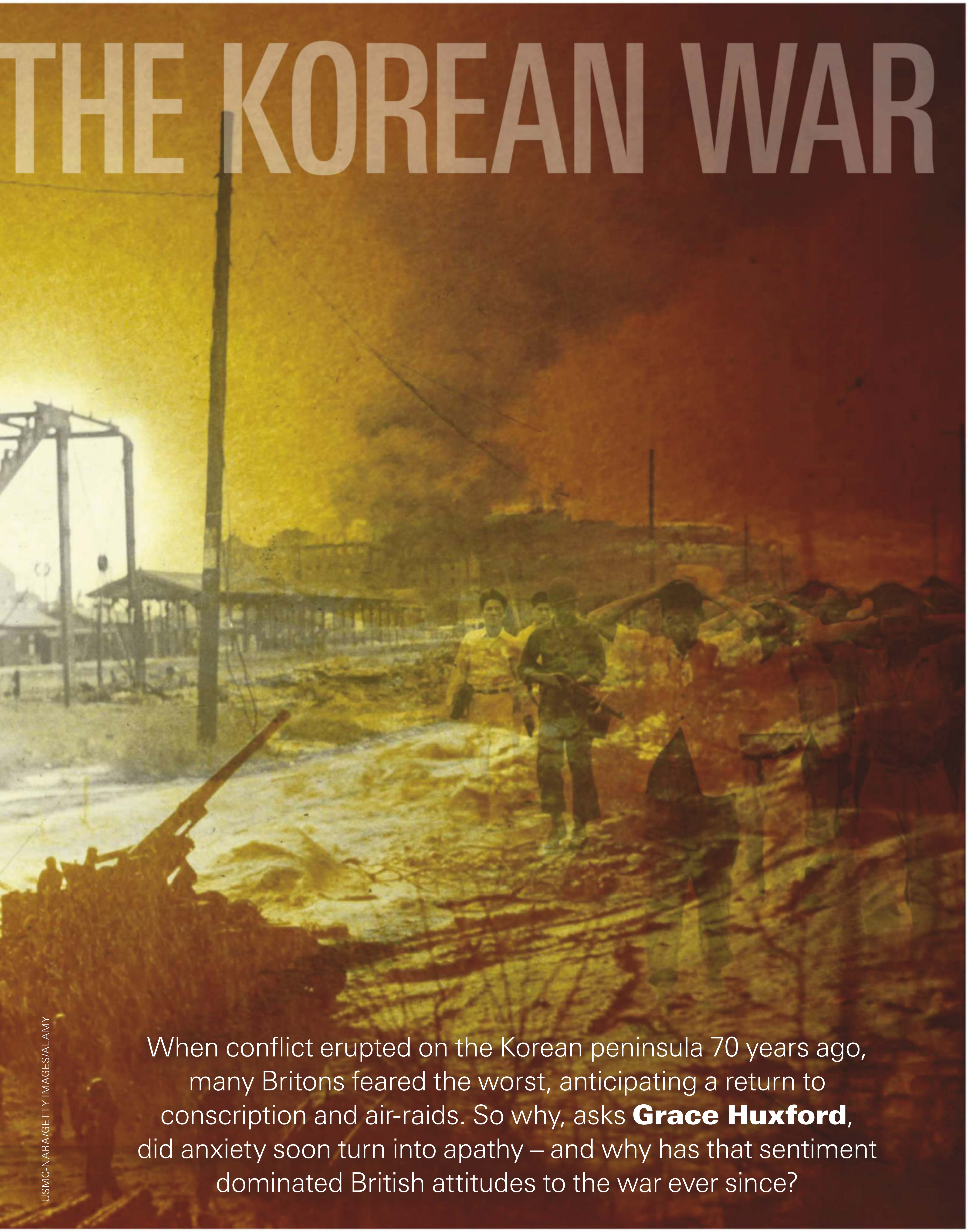
HOW WE FORGOT



Distant suffering

ABOVE: **A girl, with her brother on her back, trudges past a stalled American tank, South Korea, June 1951**
OPPOSITE PAGE: **US troops march North Koreans along a dirt road**
BACKGROUND IMAGE: **Howitzers in action around Seoul, 1950**

THE KOREAN WAR



USMC-NARA/GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

When conflict erupted on the Korean peninsula 70 years ago, many Britons feared the worst, anticipating a return to conscription and air-raids. So why, asks **Grace Huxford**, did anxiety soon turn into apathy – and why has that sentiment dominated British attitudes to the war ever since?

Today, not many people know the names Hewlett Johnson or Monica Felton. But during the Korean War (1950–53), these two figures were well known, even notorious, for their opposition to British involvement in Korea. Their stories tell us an alternative history of the Korean War, of the *social* response to the conflict back in Britain. Even though the fighting raged many thousands of miles away, Felton and Johnson show us the complex impact it had in Britain, the legacies of which we continue to live with today.

To grasp why these two Britons opposed the Korean War so passionately, we need first to understand why the conflict erupted in the first place – and, to do that, we must return to the climax of the Second World War. When the Japanese empire collapsed in August 1945, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to divide the Korean peninsula into two occupation zones, along a latitude line – the 38th Parallel North.

By 1948, the two areas of occupation had become separate states championing bitterly opposing ideologies: Kim Il-sung's communist Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north, and Syngman Rhee's western-aligned Republic of Korea in the south. Over the following two years, tensions between the two rivals increased inexorably until, on 25 June 1950, North Korean troops invaded their southern neighbour.

Britain soon become one of many nations to pledge their military support to the United Nations force – led by the charismatic American general Douglas MacArthur – tasked with defending the south. The war took on a whole new – and far more dangerous – dimension when the People's Republic of China entered the fray in October 1950 to support North Korea. In short, for Britain, the Cold War got considerably hot in 1950. And the situation would remain serious until, after three years of rapid advances, retreats and then grinding stalemate, an armistice was signed in July 1953.

At first, many Britons supported the government's decision to throw its weight behind the UN intervention. But not Hewlett Johnson and Monica Felton. Johnson was a senior Church of England clergyman, known as the 'Red' Dean of Canterbury because of his support for leftwing causes. A committed pacifist, he and others claimed that the United States was using aerial "germ warfare" against the enemy (historians now overwhelmingly believe that such claims weren't based on any credible scientific fact.). One report accused US air forces of dropping diseased rodents over three Chinese provinces in 1952. Johnson himself visited China and attracted considerable attention – and derision – for siding with the communists, not least from others in the Church of England. The Kent Branch of the British Legion even discussed moving their Remembrance Day celebrations away from Canterbury, so that this "avowed communist" would not take their service during this time of war.

Divisive figure
The Labour councillor and anti-war campaigner Monica Felton, pictured in 1952. After Felton visited North Korea on a "fact-finding mission", one Conservative MP suggested that she should be tried for treason

TOPFOTO

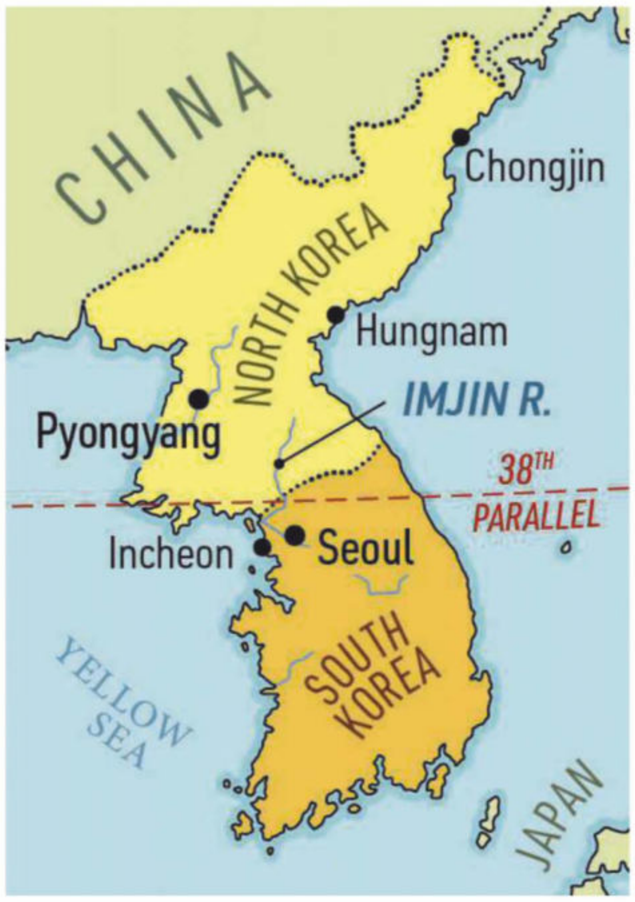
ON THE OUTBREAK OF THE KOREAN WAR, MANY BRITISH SOLDIERS COULDN'T EVEN LOCATE KOREA ON A MAP

Dr Monica Felton was the chair of the Stevenage Development Corporation, the first female chair of one of Britain's new postwar towns, and a Labour councillor. In spring 1951, she visited North Korea as part of a sponsored "fact-finding mission" and similarly accused American and South Korean forces of widespread brutality, with Britain standing by. Felton even later claimed that she had visited Korea "for Stevenage", to protect the postwar vision "for a new and better kind of world".

Felton's vision attracted a storm of criticism. When she returned to Britain, she found she had been sacked by Hugh Dalton, the chair of the Public Accounts Committee. Others clamoured for a harsher punishment. Nigel Fisher, Conservative MP for Hitchin, argued that she should be indicted for treason. He stated in parliament that if,

friendship with

The red resistance
Hewlett Johnson, dean of Canterbury, gives a speech to the British-China Friendship Association in London, 1952. Johnson accused the Americans of employing "germ warfare" against the enemy in Korea



North and South
The Korean War broke out when communist troops surged over the 38th Parallel separating the two Koreas. Both sides' fortunes ebbed and flowed over the following three years

during the Second World War, "a British subject had gone to Germany, consorted with the enemy, returned to this country and spread Nazi propaganda here, it seems to me he could have been indicted for treason… What is the difference in this case?" And in 1951, the punishment for treason was still the death penalty. Felton escaped this fate, but she never returned to public service after her fateful visit to east Asia.

The uncertain peace

Felton and Johnson's opposition to the Korean War – and the backlash that their opposition provoked – shines a light onto Britain's view of its place in the world in the early 1950s. Britain at this time was adjusting uncertainly to peacetime and was concerned about what the new Cold War would bring. When it pledged its forces to the UN effort as part of an allied "police action" (as US president Harry Truman termed it), it was still recovering from the massive social and economic effects of the Second World War. Many staple items, such as tea, were still rationed, and on the outbreak of war in Korea, many British people worried that they would again have to fight. A few even considered redigging their Anderson shelters or hoarding food.

Yet for all the fear and the fury of the summer of 1950, over the following three years something strange happened: the Korean War retreated in the public consciousness, mutating from a cause celebre to a bloody sideshow. When news of an armistice filtered back to Britain in July 1953, it was greeted with widespread indifference. One newspaper quipped that the public had shown more enthusiasm for the England cricket team's victory over Australia in that summer's Ashes.

That general indifference was far from short-lived: it informed attitudes to the conflict in the following decades. With the notable exception of the sitcom *Fawlty Towers* (Basil Fawlty was probably the nation's best-known Korean War veteran), few British novels, TV shows and films remembered Korea – and the war was commemorated by only a handful of national memorials.

MORE FROM US

Grace Huxford will be talking about the **Korean War** on our podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

So why did a conflict that cost more than a thousand British lives not become a bigger part of British culture? Why are Hewlett Johnson and Monica Felton now footnotes in modern British history? In short, how did we forget the Korean War?

One reason perhaps lies in its location. Unlike other areas of east Asia, Britain had few historic links with the Korean peninsula. Many British soldiers could not even find Korea on a map prior to 1950.

Despite this, some British troops had encountered their Korean counterparts just a few years earlier – recalling their harsh treatment at the hands of Korean guards in Japanese PoW camps. But not even these bitter memories could prevent Korea from seeming incredibly remote to most Britons.

Ambiguous aims

Another potential reason why the Korean War failed to capture Britons' imagination was its ambiguous aims. Britain pledged first naval and then land forces to support the UN mission in Korea, eventually forming a crucial part of the 1st Commonwealth Division from 28 July 1951. In a broadcast in 1950, Labour prime minister Clement Attlee implied that it was in Britons' interests to face

GETTY IMAGES/BATTLEFIELD-DESIGN.CO.UK

down aggression in the far east, just as they had done in the last war. He told the British people: "The fire that has been started in distant Korea may burn down your house."

Attlee's government is often better known for the foundation of the postwar welfare state, most famously its establishment of a National Health Service in 1948. Yet this reforming administration dealt in warfare as well as welfare, becoming embroiled in violence in Kenya, Palestine, Malaya, Greece – and, of course, Korea. Such wars did not fit within Britain's postwar vision of itself, so Korea and other wars in the 1950s slipped through the net of British national memory.

THE WAR DID NOT FIT WITH BRITAIN'S POSTWAR VISION OF ITSELF, SO IT SLIPPED THROUGH THE NET OF NATIONAL MEMORY

China turns the tables

But what did combating aggression and supporting the UN actually look like? In the first half of the war, it clearly involved repelling the invasion. But from autumn 1950, having turned the North Korean invasion into a retreat, UN forces pressed on beyond the 38th Parallel. When China joined the war in the autumn of 1950, it turned the tables completely, forcing the UN troops back south of the 38th Parallel. MacArthur even talked of using nuclear weapons against China, something that caused significant trepidation in Britain.

For Britain, the war looked even more troubling by April 1951, when British forces engaged in one of the most ferocious battles in its postwar history, at the Imjin river. This was the scene of the Gloucestershire Regiment's famous 'last stand' on 'Gloster Hill' (Solma-Ri). Some 527 British soldiers were captured and marched north to prisoner of war camps. Among them was their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel James Carne, who was awarded the Victoria Cross on his release in 1953 for "gallant and distinguished service in Korea". A naturally quiet man, Carne withstood months of solitary confinement as a PoW; a stone cross he carved is still on display in Gloucester Cathedral, testament to his bravery.

While Carne and his fellow PoWs were being held captive, the nature of the war changed again. With the sweeping retreats and advances of the first year of the conflict being largely replaced by patrols and skirmishes around the frontline – amid lots of watching and waiting – the war now lacked the narrative arc to capture the public imagination. As a result, it gradually slid off the front pages of newspapers.

Above all, there appeared to be a growing disconnect between the war's stated objectives and the reality of what was unfolding on the ground. One soldier wrote in 1951 that "the events of spring have gone" and the "futility of it becomes more and more

Still standing
Survivors of the Gloucestershire Regiment after the battle of Imjin river, 1951, one of the fiercest clashes of Britain's postwar history

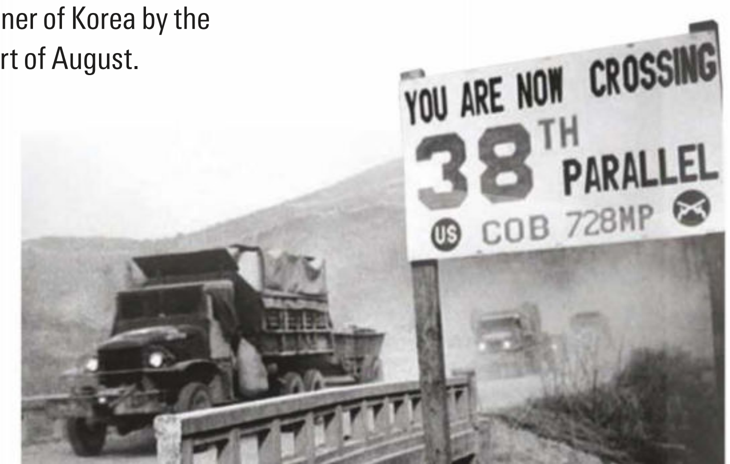
GETTY IMAGES/NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM/MIRRORPIX

TIMELINE The Korean War

25 June 1950
North Korean forces cross the 38th Parallel into South Korea. On 27 June, the UN Security Council calls for their withdrawal and asks for military assistance for the South. At the outbreak of war, 22 Royal Navy vessels are already in the region and are quick to provide naval support.

7 July 1950
A UN Command is established under General Douglas MacArthur of the United States Army. **UN forces are forced back to Pusan** in the south-east corner of Korea by the start of August.

7–9 October 1950
MacArthur outflanks North Korean forces at Incheon and marches north, crossing the 38th Parallel into North Korea on 9 October 1950.



UN trucks cross the 38th Parallel as they retreat from Pyongyang, 1950

October–November 1950
The People's Republic of **China enters the war** in support of North Korea, pushing back the UN advance.

14 March 1951
UN forces seize Seoul. This is the fourth time that the now devastated South Korean capital has changed hands during the war. By now, most of the city's population has fled.

apparent every day". Korea did not match up with his idea of what war should be.

That sense of futility was only exacerbated by Britain's recent experience of conflict. The Korean War was fought in a very long shadow – one cast by the Second World War. Keith Taylor remembered how the reservists in his battalion "had seen it all before", having carved out distinguished careers between 1939 and 1945, and "one acknowledged their great experience".

Back in Britain, too, Korea was often compared with the struggle against Nazism: in July 1950, the social surveying organisation Mass Observation captured many responses that referenced the Blitz, mass mobilisation and fears about the prospect of returning to air-raid shelters. Aerial bombing was never a real possibility, but that didn't stop people *feeling* that it was. In comparison with the vast scale and clear moral imperatives of the fight against fascism, the Korean War appeared ambiguous and distant.

Thirst for drama

Of course, this sense of remoteness and futility didn't apply to everyone. For many of Britain's National Service conscripts, Korea offered a break from the monotony of their temporary military life. Lieutenant Gary Smith wrote to his family that the outbreak of war "is a wonderful opportunity to travel which I probably wouldn't have had otherwise" and was desperate to get to Korea before it was "just policing". For many, this thirst for drama went unquenched. As early as July 1951, the two sides had begun to negotiate, discussions that seemed to stretch on and on. One particular sticking point was the repatriation of prisoners of war: should

11 April 1951

MacArthur is relieved from UN Command by US president Harry Truman for "political insubordination".

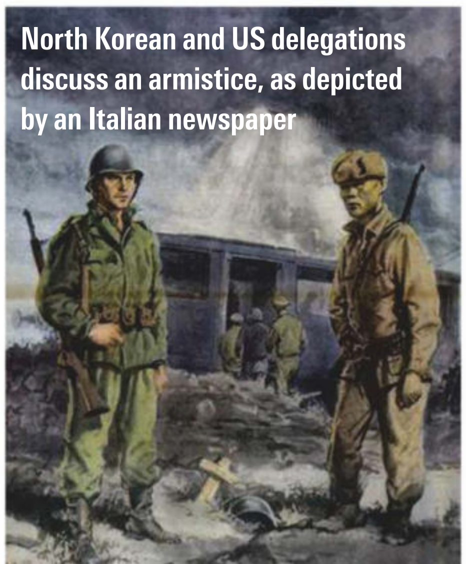
General MacArthur headed the UN force until getting the sack

23–25 April 1951

The battle of the Imjin river sees the heroic last stand of the Glorious Glosters (1st Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment) under the command of James Carne. Some 527 **members of the Gloucestershire Regiment are captured** and marched north into captivity.

10 July 1951

Early peace negotiations begin between the two sides.



North Korean and US delegations discuss an armistice, as depicted by an Italian newspaper

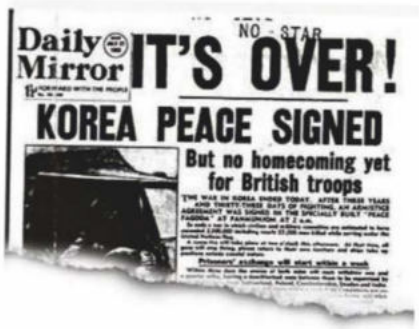
28–29 May 1953

Though heavily outnumbered, a force of mainly **British soldiers fight off an attack** by predominately Chinese forces at the (third) battle of the Hook, near Kaesong.

27 July 1953

An armistice – but no formal peace treaty – is signed. A Geneva Conference on Korean Unification follows in 1954, but no agreement is reached.

The *Daily Mirror* announces the end of the war – to widespread apathy

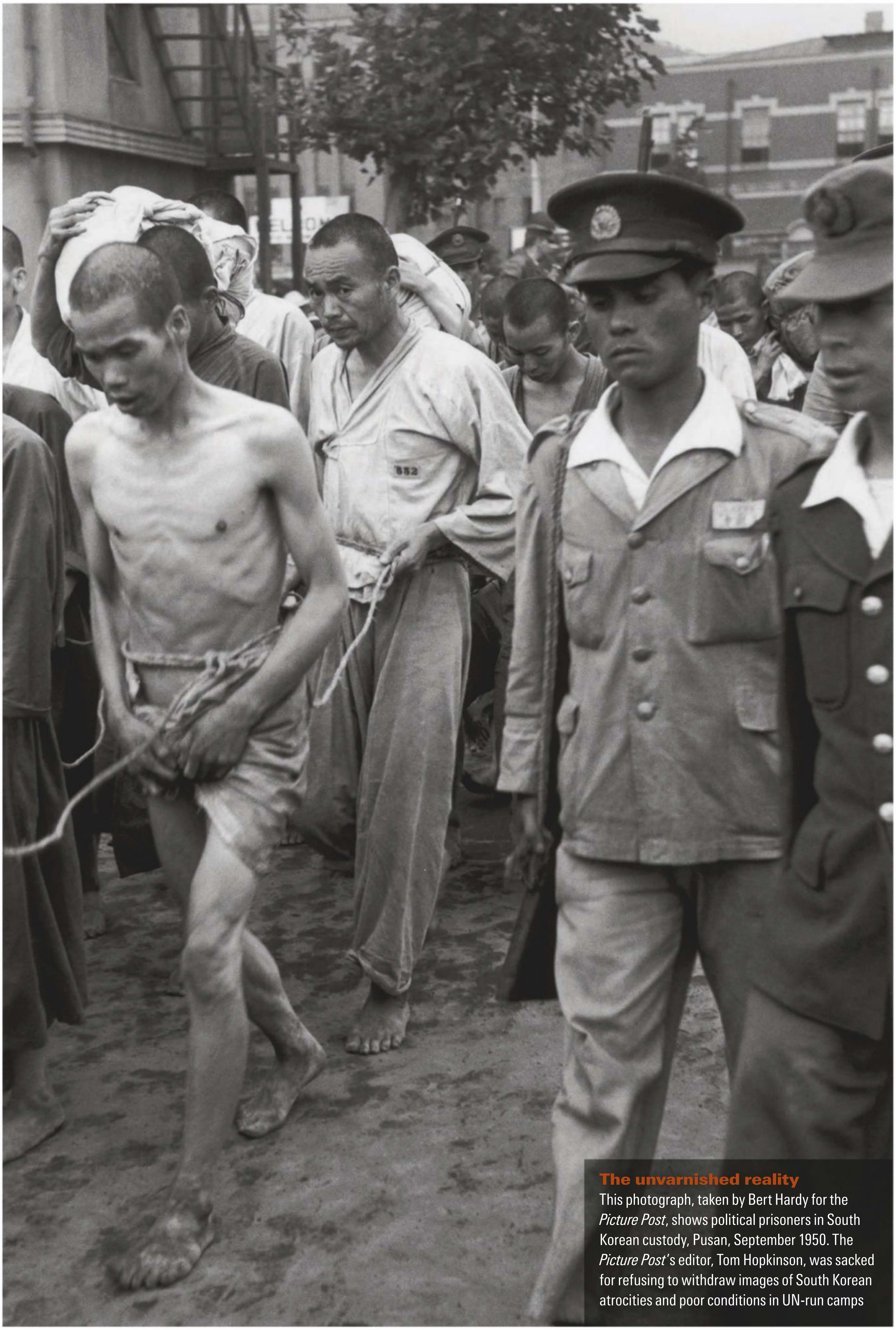


Daily Mirror

IT'S OVER!

KOREA PEACE SIGNED

But no homecoming yet for British troops



The unvarnished reality
This photograph, taken by Bert Hardy for the *Picture Post*, shows political prisoners in South Korean custody, Pusan, September 1950. The *Picture Post*'s editor, Tom Hopkinson, was sacked for refusing to withdraw images of South Korean atrocities and poor conditions in UN-run camps

GETTY IMAGES

Chinese and North Korean PoWs held by the UN be automatically repatriated back to their home countries when many had been forced to fight in the first place? China (and the Geneva Convention) suggested yes, but the UN forces were reluctant.

The experience of British prisoners of war would have a particular cultural and political impact domestically. After their repatriation, military authorities interviewed many former British PoWs and began to hear more about their experiences. Some had been forced to take part in extraordinary 're-education' classes in Chinese-run camps, asked to produce 'confessions', keep diaries and even take part in classes on the communist system.

Most took this 're-education' with good humour or bemusement, but some listened. One, Royal Marine Andrew Condron, even opted to travel to China at the end of the war to see a communist society in action. In 1961, it was discovered that British diplomat and secret service agent George Blake, who had been imprisoned during the Korean War, had become a Soviet double agent. His dramatic escape from Wormwood Scrubs prison in 1966 caused even greater consternation, and led many to ask: what exactly had happened in those camps?

A new word emerged that would have a long cultural afterlife. In 1950, American writer Edward Hunter wrote of "brainwashing", a term based on the Chinese word *hsi-nao*, to describe these mind-control methods. While the scientific community largely distanced itself from this idea, its cultural power was immense: it featured in films such as *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962) and *The Ipcress File* (1965) and was repeatedly used by politicians, commentators and ordinary people throughout the late 20th century to describe seemingly inexplicable changes in viewpoint. It remains one of the most enduring legacies of the Korean War today.

There were other sensational stories that brought the Korean War briefly back to the front pages. Tom Hopkinson, the editor of the magazine *Picture Post*, was sacked for refusing to withdraw photographs of atrocities committed by South Korean forces and poor conditions in UN-run PoW camps. Opposition to the Korean War was an important prelude to the oppositional politics of the peace movement – most obviously the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), which organised its first Aldermaston March in 1958.

But, for all this, the anti-Korean War movement never gained the same momentum as the anti-nuclear or anti-Vietnam campaigns. In the words of the historian Charles Young, the war's subtleties and ambiguities failed to offer a "usable past" in the way that other 20th-century conflicts did.

MANY BRITISH POWS WERE ASKED TO PROVIDE 'CONFESSIONS' AND TAKE PART IN CLASSES ON COMMUNISM

Mind control
The Manchurian Candidate (1962) turned fears of the brainwashing of PoWs in Korea into a Hollywood hit

ALAMY

A sharp contrast

The uneasy armistice signed at Panmunjom on 27 July 1953 did little to provide clarity. In fact, as no peace treaty was signed, the war technically continues to this day. Soldiers returned home to "utter apathy on the part of the public", the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* noted. Popular culture dwelt little on the experiences of Korean War veterans. There was but one British film on the war: *A Hill in Korea* (1956), starring a young Michael Caine, fresh back from National Service in Korea himself.

Many veterans did not seek out their comrades again until they were retired, forming the British Korean Veterans Association in 1981. Some returned to the Korean peninsula, where they marvelled not only at South Korea's economic progress in the decades after the war but the generous reception they were given by the country's people. It contrasted sharply with their remembrance back in Britain.

But despite decades of oversight, there are tentative signs that Britain's amnesia over the Korean War is clearing. December 2014 saw the unveiling of a memorial to the conflict on London's Victoria Embankment, and Korea has gained greater visibility in drama and television – even producing a traumatised veteran in *Call the Midwife*.

Few people still know the names of Monica Felton and Hewlett Johnson. But their stories tell us something of how the Korean War influenced life back in Britain. In Stevenage, a pair of almond trees planted in Felton's memory forms one of the only reminders of this fascinating chapter in Britain's Cold War history. H

Grace Huxford is a senior lecturer in modern history at the University of Bristol. Her book *The Korean War in Britain: Citizenship, Selfhood and Forgetting* was published by MUP in 2018

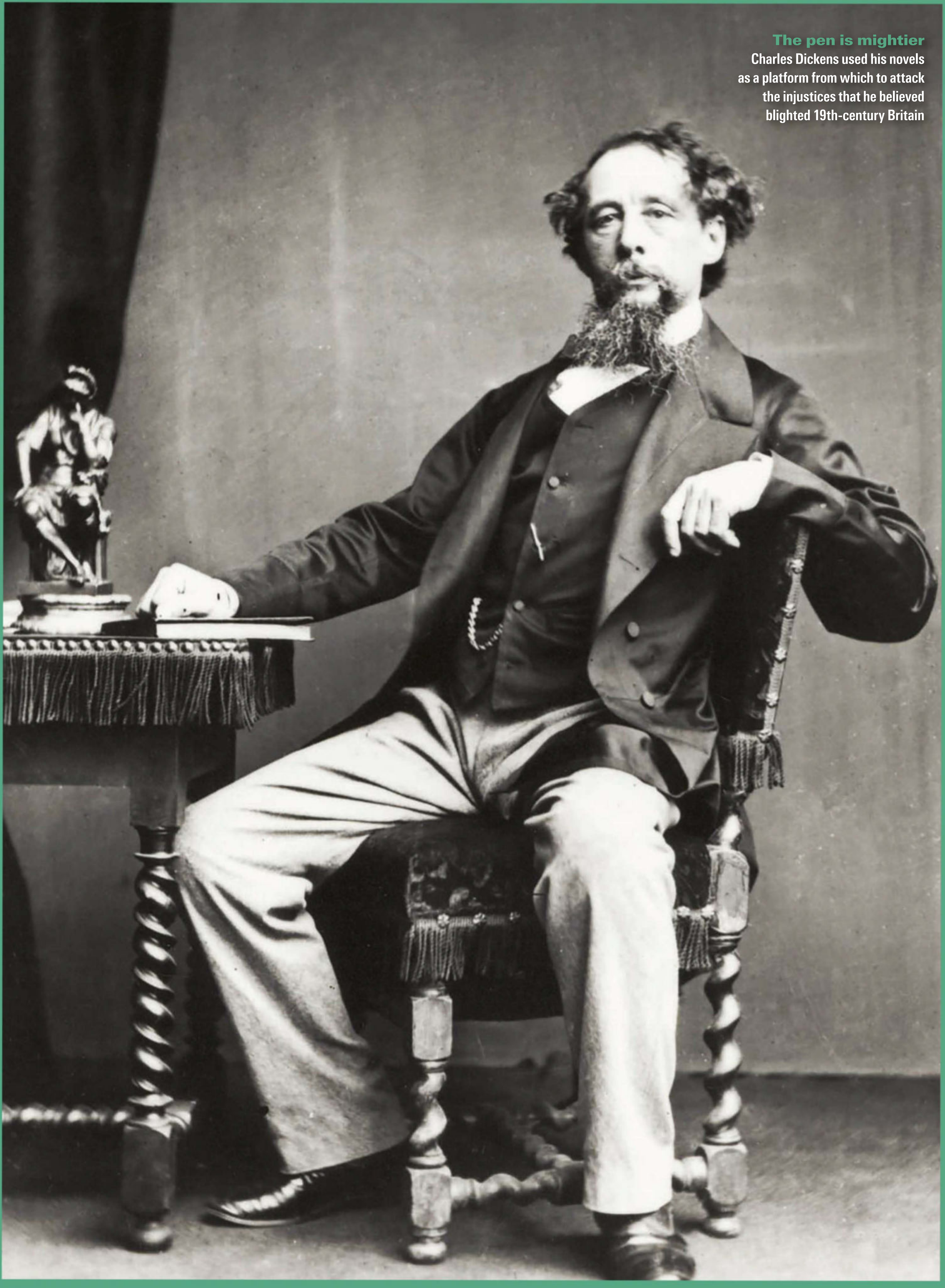
LISTEN You can listen to Grace Huxford discussing national service during the Korean War on BBC Radio 4's **Archive on 4** at *bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000g520*

BBC RADIO 4

PRISON REFORMER, SCOURGE OF CAPITALISTS...

On the 150th anniversary of his death, **Rosalind Crone** highlights four ways in which righteous anger fuelled **Charles Dickens**’ social crusades

CHAMPION OF THE POOR



The pen is mightier
Charles Dickens used his novels as a platform from which to attack the injustices that he believed blighted 19th-century Britain

GETTY IMAGES

AT WAR WITH THE WORKHOUSE

From the pages of novels such as *Oliver Twist*, Dickens savaged the injustices meted out to the impoverished – and at the top of his hit-list was the infamous New Poor Law

"Please, Sir, I want some more." Charles Dickens' portrayal of Oliver Twist approaching the master and asking him, timorously, for a second helping of gruel is surely one of the most famous scenes in all of 19th-century literature.

When Dickens wrote these words in the 1830s, huge celebrity and vast fortune still lay in the future. Instead the author was thinking of the here and now – in particular, the plight of the most impoverished Britons. Dickens was determined to savage the terrible injustices he saw unfolding around him, and did that so effectively that he soon secured a reputation as a spokesman for the poor.

Dickens' righteous anger, voiced so elegantly in his second novel, didn't spring from nowhere; it was brought bubbling to the surface by the New Poor Law. Passed in 1834, at a time of expanding poverty, this legislation curtailed the provision of outdoor relief, giving those who fell on hard times the starkest of choices: to enter the workhouse, where they would be provided with food and shelter but subjected to a harsh regime, or to take their chances outside without assistance.

Dickens' writings on urban slum life exposed the rich to the poverty that existed in their midst

Via a series of articles, Dickens launched a scathing attack on the cruelties inflicted by this system through the story of a child systematically mistreated in the workhouse simply for being orphaned and unwanted. The articles evolved into a serialised novel that even captured the attention of Queen Victoria. One journalist claimed that *Oliver Twist* had made such an impression that promoters of the New Poor Law had to go "about lecturing for the purpose of counteracting the effect".

Too tainted for squalor

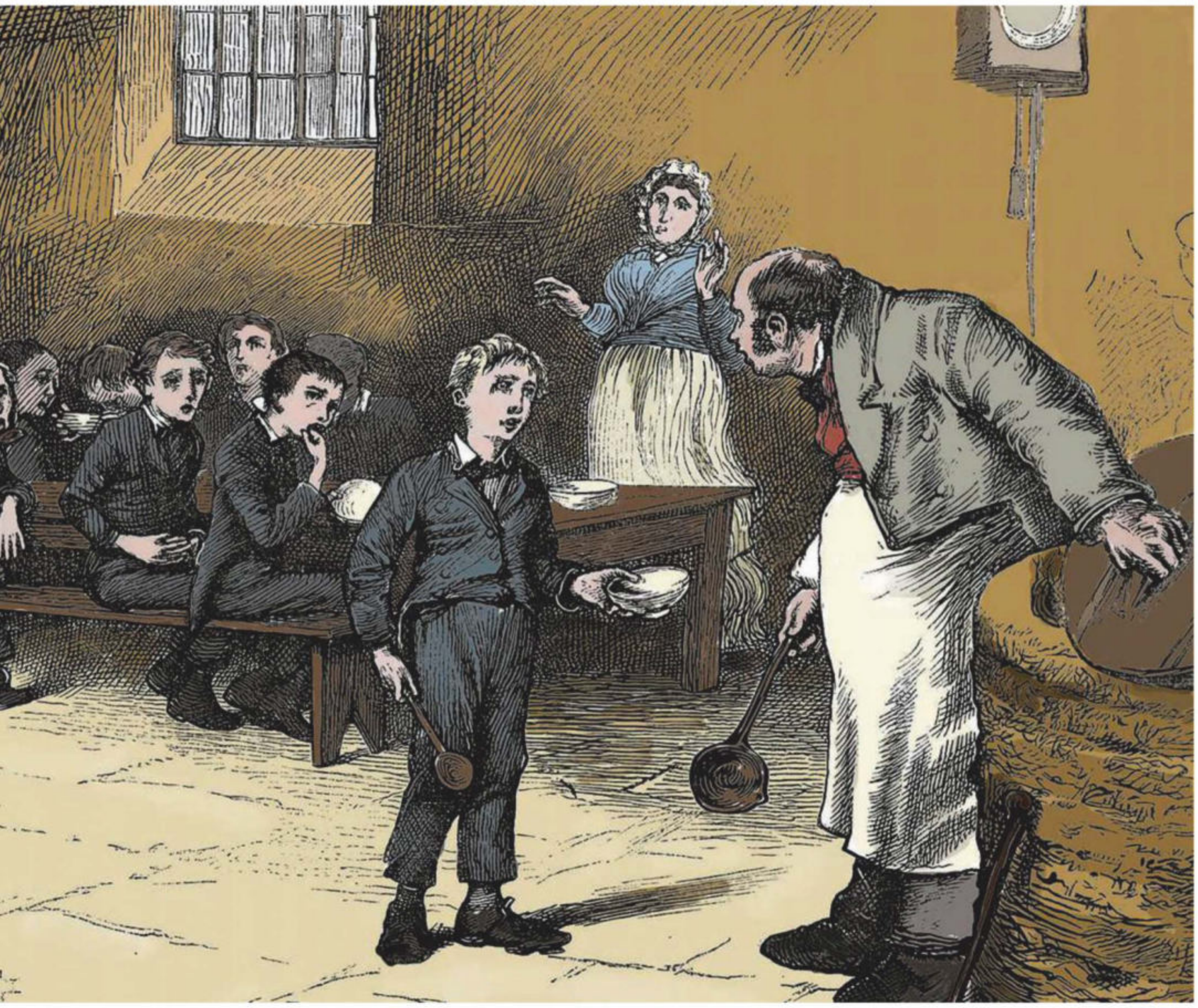
Dickens' writing also contained vivid descriptions of urban slum life, which exposed affluent Britons to the poverty that existed in their midst. Readers of *Oliver Twist* were shocked to discover that Jacob's Island, a south London neighbourhood crammed with houses "so filthy, so confined, that the air would seem to be too tainted even for the dirt and squalor", actually existed!

At the same time, Dickens sought to humanise the poor, to elicit the sympathy of readers. Few could fail to be moved by the plight of the Cratchit family in *A Christmas Carol*, struggling to survive on meagre wages, yet still full of warmth and affection.

Dickens warned readers of the consequences of poverty. He was fearful of the potential for revolution (the devastation of which he dramatised in *A Tale of Two Cities*) and of an upsurge in crime.

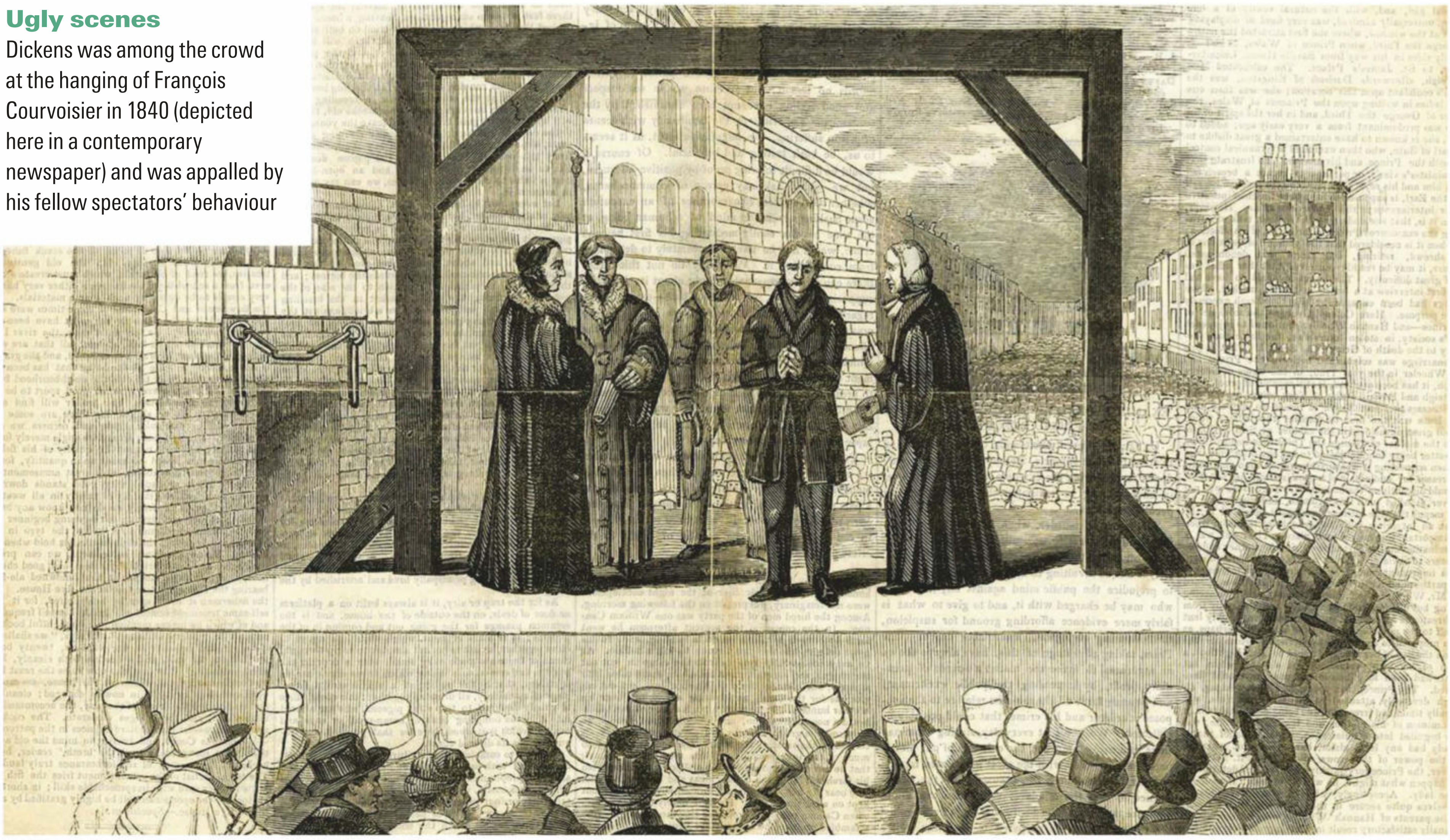
Government intervention was essential, he contended. Dickens campaigned for the provision of state schooling to prevent crime, and for the establishment of reformatories to save juvenile offenders. "Woe, woe! Can the state devise no better sentence for its little children?" he wrote, when he heard that two boys had been whipped for stealing a loaf of bread. "Will it never sentence them to be taught?"

Dickens had less sympathy for adult offenders. Once criminal propensities had been formed, he argued, they should be "crushed like savage beasts and cleared out of the way". Not everyone agreed with this uncompromising stance. As early as 1851, even the poor were questioning Dickens' support for their cause. "Mr Dickens *was* a favourite," an itinerant street seller told the social investigator Henry Mayhew, "but he has gone down sadly in the scale."



A hunger for change Oliver Twist asks for more gruel, in one of the most famous scenes of 19th-century literature. Dickens' second novel laid bare the cruelties of workhouses in the 1830s

GETTY IMAGES



Ugly scenes
Dickens was among the crowd at the hanging of François Courvoisier in 1840 (depicted here in a contemporary newspaper) and was appalled by his fellow spectators' behaviour

WRITING IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH

Dickens was in the thick of an intense debate about the punishment of Britain's criminals

"No sorrow, no salutary terror, no abhorrence, no seriousness, nothing but ribaldry, debauchery, levity, drunkenness and flaunting vice in 50 other shapes." When, in July 1840, Dickens attended the public execution of François Courvoisier for the murder of Lord William Russell, the reaction of the crowd that gathered to gawp at the spectacle left the author both shocked and appalled.

The punishment of criminals was transformed during Dickens's lifetime. His condemnation of capital punishment for minor offences in *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) was published at the end of the dismantlement of the notorious 'Bloody Code'. By the 1840s, the capital sanction remained for just a handful of serious offences, and in practice only murderers were hanged.

But as Dickens discovered when he, along with some 30,000 others, gathered outside Newgate Prison to watch Courvoisier hang, the relative rarity of a public execution only increased its appeal.

Despite the "particular detestation" that he felt towards Courvoisier, Dickens concluded an editorial letter penned for the *Daily News* with a plea for the "total abolition of the Punishment of Death, as a general principle, for the advantage of society, [and] for the prevention of crime".

Just three years later, Dickens had changed his mind. His letters to *The Times* on the execution of the murderers Frederick and Maria Manning pressed for the privatisation of hanging, rather than its total abolition. While his new position attracted the ire of campaigners, Dickens was not out of step with his contemporaries, many of whom had retreated from a position of complete abolition in the hope of achieving a change in the law.

> Prolonged solitary confinement was a mental torture that led to insanity

Suffering in silence

Dickens also become embroiled in a controversy over prison discipline that erupted in the late 1830s. The desire to exert greater control over prisoners through the elimination of contact between them led to the emergence of two rival systems: silence and separation. In late 1842, Dickens published his account of a visit to Eastern Penitentiary in Philadelphia, where the purest form of separate confinement was practised. Inmates were locked in solitary cells, sometimes for years, with their Bibles and work, the slow march of time punctuated only by occasional visits from moral agents. "I believe it, in its effects, to be cruel and wrong," he wrote. Solitary confinement was a mental torture which led to insanity.

Dickens' travelogue *American Notes* (1842) appeared in the months before the opening of Pentonville Prison, which shared Eastern Penitentiary's faith in solitary confinement and religious instruction. Dickens' opposition to such practices remained undimmed. An intensive focus on the soul of the individual, he observed, encouraged a "strange, absorbing selfishness – a spiritual egotism and vanity". Prisoners were either deceiving themselves, or hoodwinking chaplains.

Dickens' critique reached a climax in the final instalment of his serialised novel *David Copperfield*, when the hero pays a visit to a thinly disguised Pentonville and encounters Uriah Heep, performing the role of the penitent prisoner. The "rattling fun of the caricature told powerfully on the British public", prison reformer Walter Clay later wrote, hastening the demise of the obsession with solitary confinement.

BRIDGEMAN

INDUSTRIALISED MISERY

Dickens reserved some of his most scathing attacks for capitalists who put profits over people

By the 1830s, northern England had become home to a new, industrial landscape. Factories dominated the skylines of towns that were rapidly expanding with the influx of new workers. Long hours, dangerous working conditions and the unregulated employment of women and children created anxiety among social elites.

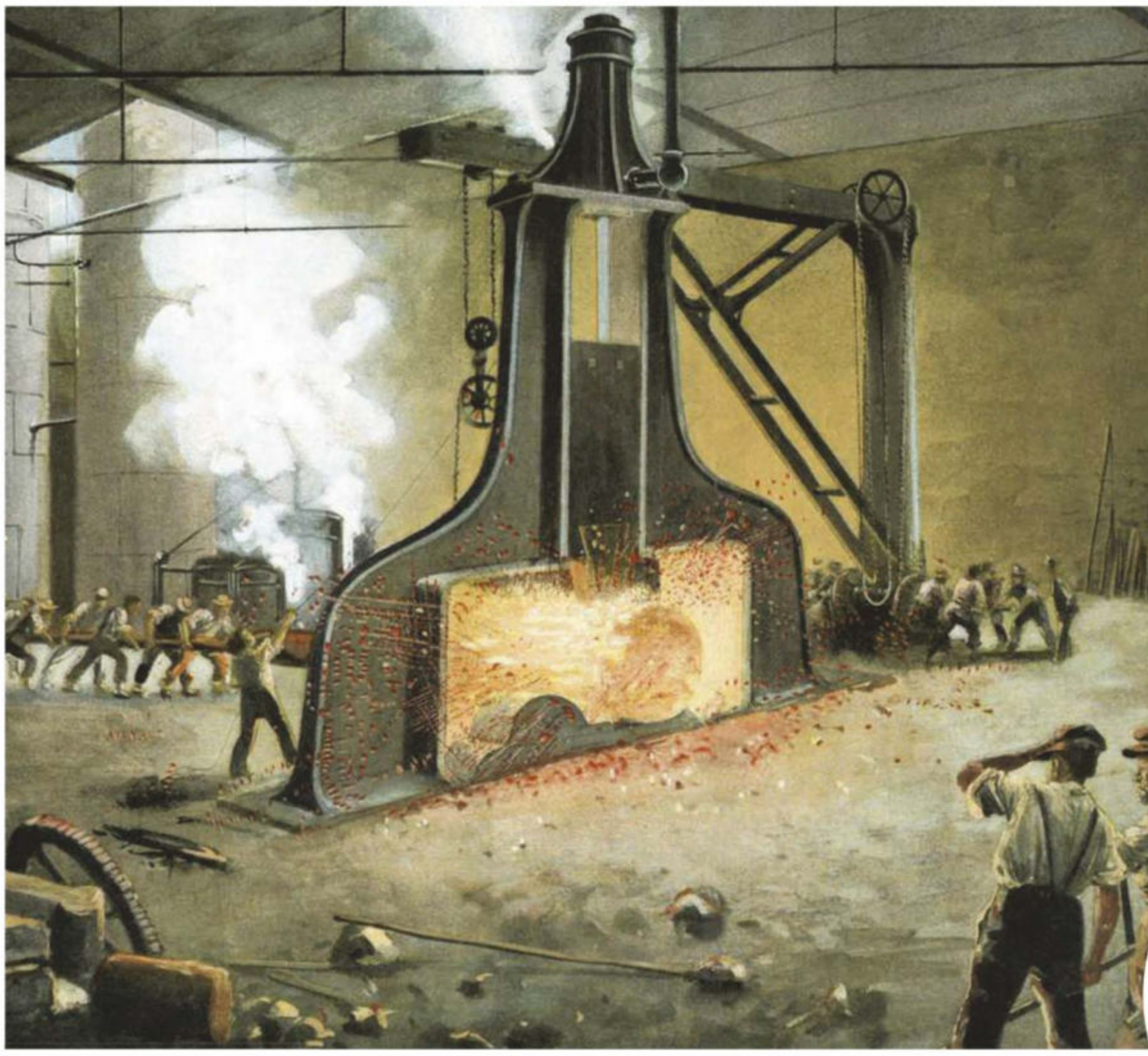
In 1838, Dickens signalled his support for legislation restricting the labour of women and adolescents to 10 hours a day. After visiting several factories in Manchester, which "disgusted and astonished me beyond all measure", he wrote of his intention to "strike the heaviest blow in my power" against the factory system. One of his next novels, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (serialised from 1840), included a frightening account of an industrial town through which Nell and her grandfather were forced to travel.

However, Dickens' tour of America in 1842 fostered ambivalence. Seduced by scenes of well-dressed and prosperous female factory workers, who had pianos in their boarding houses and subscriptions to a circulating library, he praised the factories he encountered in Lowell, Massachusetts in his *American Notes*. Subsequent public speeches also expressed pride in the achievements and potential of British industry.

When Dickens finally produced an 'industrial novel' – *Hard Times* – in 1854, he attacked the cultures of industrialism rather than factory work per se. Coketown – its ugliness and monotony, and the lack of individuality of its inhabitants – was the product of crude utilitarianism and laissez-fair capitalism, philosophies embodied in the novel's two villains. The factory owner Mr Bounderby is a despicable self-made man who views his workers solely as commodities, or 'hands'. For the local businessman Mr Gradgrind, there is nothing of value in life but facts and figures.

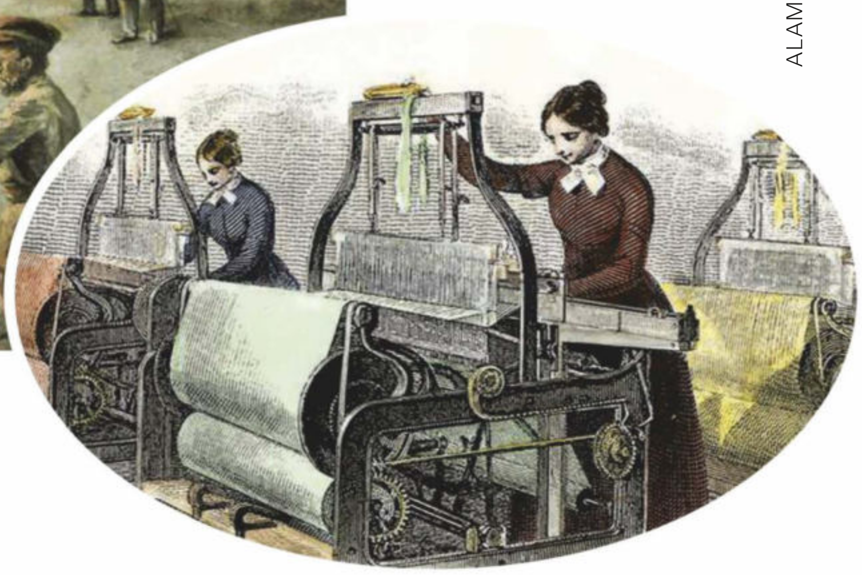
Dickens also expressed little sympathy for the striking workers – like other middle-class writers, he feared their revolutionary potential. They did not, he suggested, need better wages, but more fulsome lives. They needed, in other words, to have some fun.

> Dickens wrote of his intention to "strike the heaviest blow in my power" against the factory system



Dark satanic mill?

Metal is processed with a steam-hammer, in an 1842 engraving. In his novel *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Dickens painted a grim picture of the impact of industrialisation on workers' lives



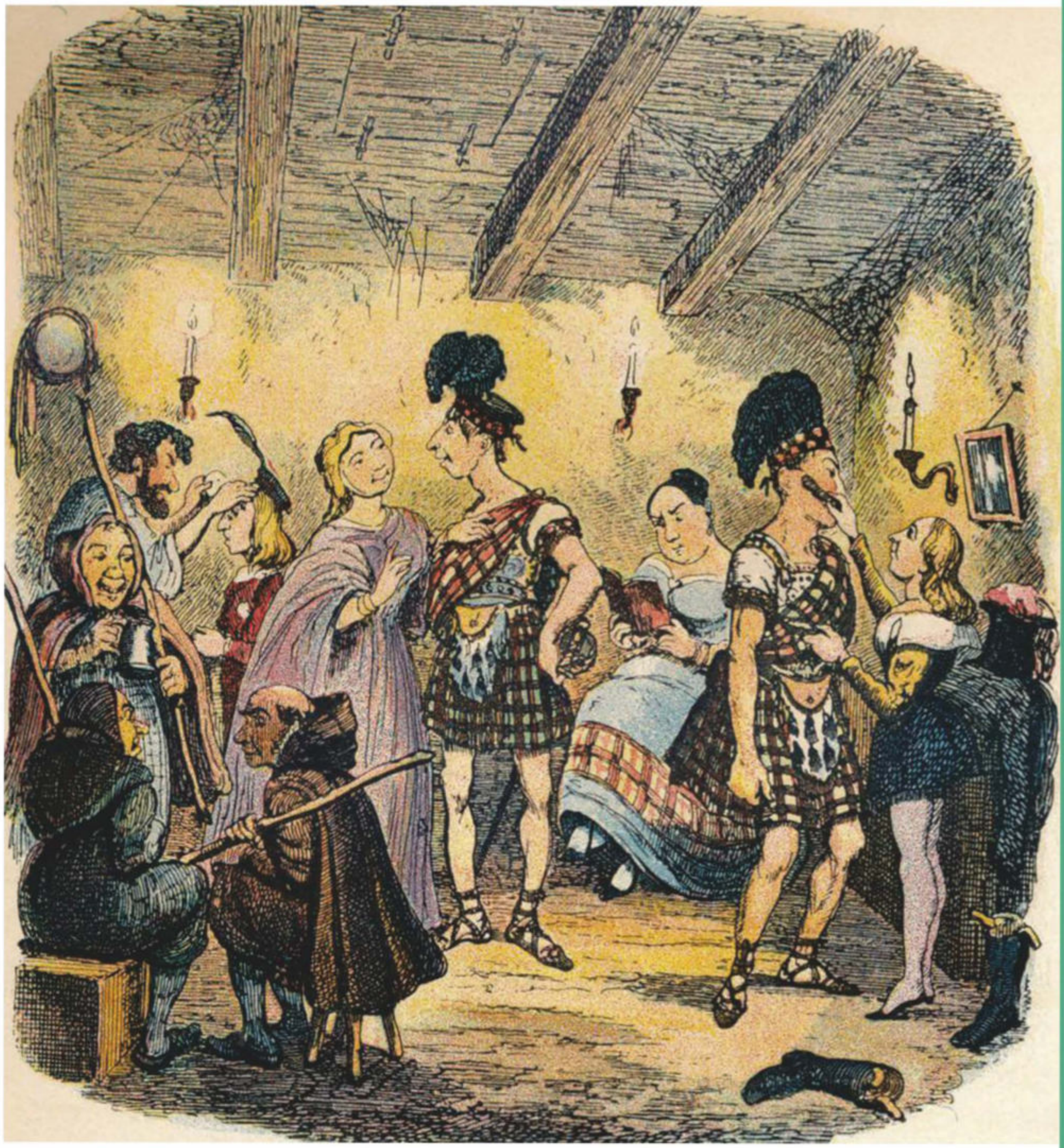
Job satisfaction

Women at work in a Massachusetts textile mill, as depicted in a hand-coloured engraving from the 1850s. The prosperity of such workers softened Dickens' hostility to the rise of the factory

ALAMY/MARY EVANS

GETTING SERIOUS WITH THE FUN POLICE

The author vigorously opposed the new social elite that turned up its nose at traditional, working-class entertainments



Theatre of dreams
This George Cruikshank illustration for Dickens' *Sketches by Boz* shows actors in a 'private theatre'. The writer argued that the march of industrialisation had made popular entertainments more important than ever

Dickens revealed his tremendous love of entertainment in his first popular serial, *Sketches by Boz*, which contained vignettes of the various amusements available in London for those in search of fun. But Dickens was living through an age of significant change in the leisure world, occasioned by the shift from an agrarian to an urban and industrial society. This transformation limited the spaces and opportunities for traditional entertainments – thanks, in large part, to the new, respectable social elite's conviction that popular amusements were vulgar and debasing.

In 1836, Dickens attacked the Sabbatarian movement – which aimed to dramatically restrict the availability of leisure on Sundays to enforce religious observance – with his pamphlet *Sunday Under Three Heads*. Four years later, *The Old Curiosity Shop* captured the plight of itinerant showmen – Punch and Judy men, stilt walkers, conjurors, freaks and waxworks proprietors – who, with precarious incomes and under the threat of suppression, were fighting for survival. "Many's the hard day's walking in rain and mud," explained Short, the Punchman, "and with never a penny earned."

Yet, as Sleary, the circus proprietor, explained to Gradgrind and Bounderby in *Hard Times*, "People must be amuthed… they can't be alwayth a working, nor yet they can't be alwayth a learning. Make the betht of uth; not the wurtht." The monotony of factory life and industrial culture, Dickens argued, made popular entertainment more essential than ever. Amusement provided an outlet for the imagination, the suppression of which would be destructive to humanity.

Heap of nonsense

Quality mattered too. As old forms of entertainment declined, new ones emerged to fill the gap, but Dickens was critical of their content.

Articles published in his periodicals *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* during the 1850s and 1860s described the theatrical entertainments frequented by the labouring classes as "an incongruous heap of nonsense". New showmen exploited the people's need for entertainment, offering them nothing that was uplifting or educative. At the same time, alternative "rational recreations" left the people unsatisfied. "There is a range of imagination in most of us, which no amount of steam-engines will satisfy; and which The-great-exhibition-of-the-works-of-industry-of-all-nations, itself, will probably leave unappeased." In short, society was singularly failing to provide the masses with the quality of entertainment that their imaginations demanded – and deserved. H

> He attacked those who wanted to restrict leisure on Sunday in favour of religious observance

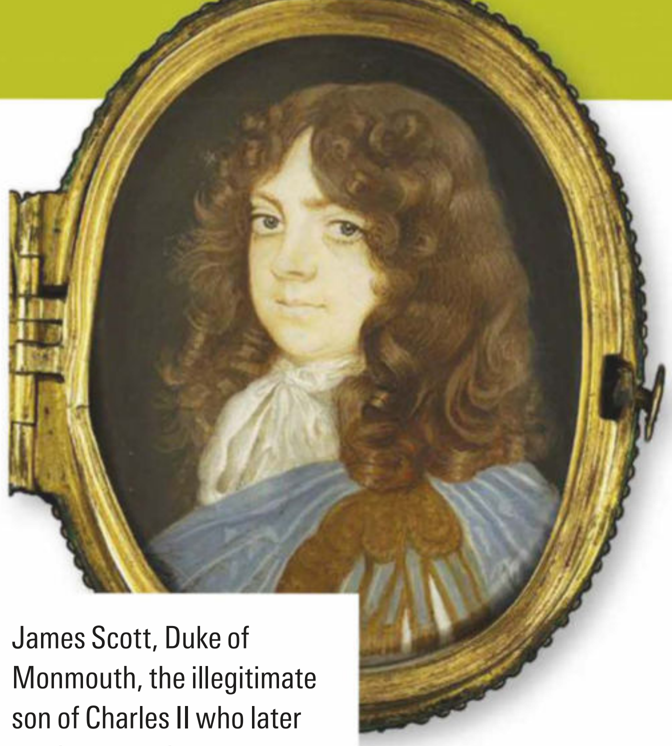
Rosalind Crone is a senior lecturer in history at the Open University

LISTEN Melvyn Bragg and guests discussed **Charles Dickens**' achievements on BBC Radio 4's **In Our Time**. To listen, go to *bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00547hx*

GETTY IMAGES

Q&A

A selection of historical **conundrums** answered by experts



James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate son of Charles II who later tried to usurp his royal uncle

Which British monarch had the most illegitimate children?

››› You would be forgiven for thinking that this is a tricky question to answer – after all, children born out of wedlock were surely not something that the royals wanted to shout about. But in fact, most monarchs were keen to prove their virility and therefore openly acknowledged – indeed, often ennobled – their illegitimate offspring.

Notable examples include Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and Somerset, whom Henry VIII was inordinately proud of because his birth seemingly proved that the king's lack of legitimate sons was the fault of his wives. Or James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, eldest illegitimate son of the 'Merrie Monarch' Charles II, who grew up with such an inflated sense of importance that he attempted to depose his uncle, James II and VII. The sons of George III, meanwhile, preferred mistresses to wives and had numerous illegitimate children between them.

But none of these royal lotharios holds the record for the greatest number of illegitimate offspring. That dubious honour goes to one of England's lesser-known kings, Henry I (reigned 1100–35), William the Conqueror's youngest son. His scholarly interests won him the sobriquet 'Beauclerc' and he was renowned for his caution. But he was also addicted to women and had as many as 24 illegitimate children by his numerous mistresses. Wily Henry not only acknowledged them all, but put them to good use. His sons were enlisted to support their royal father in government and on the battlefield, while his daughters were married off to neighbouring princes to secure alliances.

Ironically, though, Henry struggled to produce legitimate heirs. After his only male heir, William, was drowned, he was forced to leave the throne to his daughter, Matilda, which plunged the kingdom into civil war.

Tracy Borman, historian, author and joint chief curator at Historic Royal Palaces

Women working at a postal sorting office in c1914. One of the incentives for introducing house numbers and postcodes was to create a logical system of addresses for the postal service

POSTAL MUSEUM

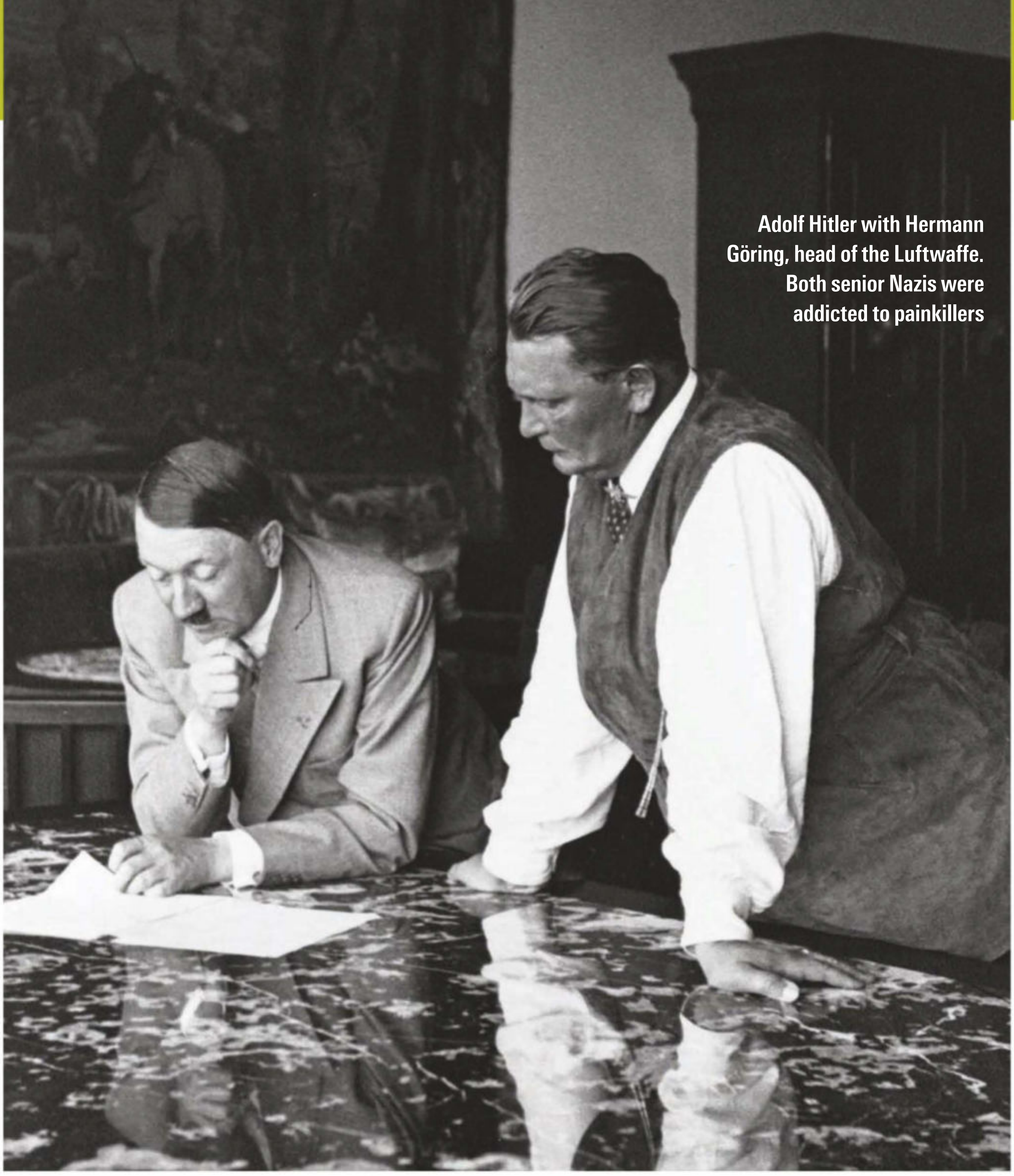
When were house numbers and postal codes first introduced?

››› As early as the 1700s, homes in urban streets were being numbered, but this was usually on a random and ad hoc basis. Some controls were laid out in legislation covering London, but the first real national laws were in the Towns Improvement Clauses Act of 1847, which made provision for street names and numbers, though they were not universal. The Metropolis Management Act of 1855 saw further regulation over the naming and numbering of London addresses.

Later legislation gave local authorities the power to require house numbering in order to create a logical and clear system of addresses, for the benefit of the Post Office and everyone else.

London's first postal districts were introduced in the 1850s and refined during the First World War. Other cities followed suit from the 1860s to 1930s. The modern postcode system, prompted by new sorting machine technologies, was rolled out in stages from the late 1950s and was fully in place by the mid-1970s.

Eugene Byrne, journalist specialising in history



Adolf Hitler with Hermann Göring, head of the Luftwaffe. Both senior Nazis were addicted to painkillers

Is it true that Hitler and his top generals were drug addicts?

Ron Nicholas, Bracknell

▸▸▸ Much ink has been spilt on this subject over recent years – but, regrettably, only some of it has resisted the lure of hyperbole and described the situation accurately.

Hitler, certainly, had what we might call a drug problem. An obsessive hypochondriac, he was easy prey for the dubious quackery of his personal physician, Dr Theodor Morell.

Consequently, by the end of his life, Hitler was on a cocktail of drugs that included painkillers, methamphetamine injections, cocaine eyedrops, bovine testosterone and indigestion tablets containing strychnine and belladonna. The extent to which these treatments directly affected his decision-making is unknown and unprovable, but it is certainly fair to assume that he was at least psychologically addicted to the drug that was most regularly administered; the painkiller Oxycodone.

The head of the Luftwaffe, Hermann Göring, meanwhile, also had a drug problem, being addicted to morphine ever since being shot during Hitler's abortive Munich Putsch of 1923. The extent of his addiction is disputed by historians, with some suggesting that he was mainly given placebos by his doctors, but he seems nonetheless to have maintained at least a manageable habit until he was weaned off the drug by Allied doctors at the end of the war.

Low-level drug use – especially of the stimulant Pervitin – was not uncommon in Nazi Germany, but, beyond Hitler and Göring, there are no other senior members of the German political or military hierarchy during the Second World War who one might sensibly class as 'drug addicts'.

Roger Moorhouse, author of *First to Fight: The Polish War 1939* (Bodley Head, 2019)

WELLCOME IMAGES

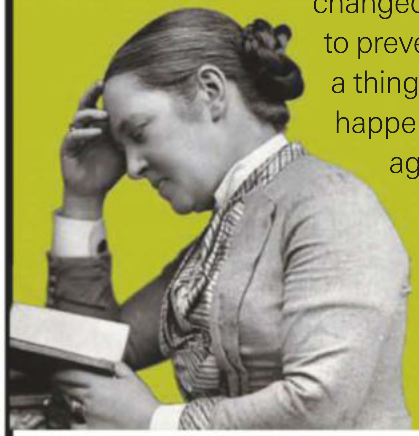
DID YOU KNOW...?

Mistaken identity

In October 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War, the Russian Baltic fleet was sailing in the North Sea when it spotted what it thought was a force of Japanese torpedo boats and opened fire. In fact the targets weren't Japanese at all, but a **fleet of English fishing trawlers operating out of Hull**. In what became known as the Dogger Bank Incident, two fishermen were killed, one trawler was sunk and four others damaged before the Russians ceased fire.

Pioneering physician

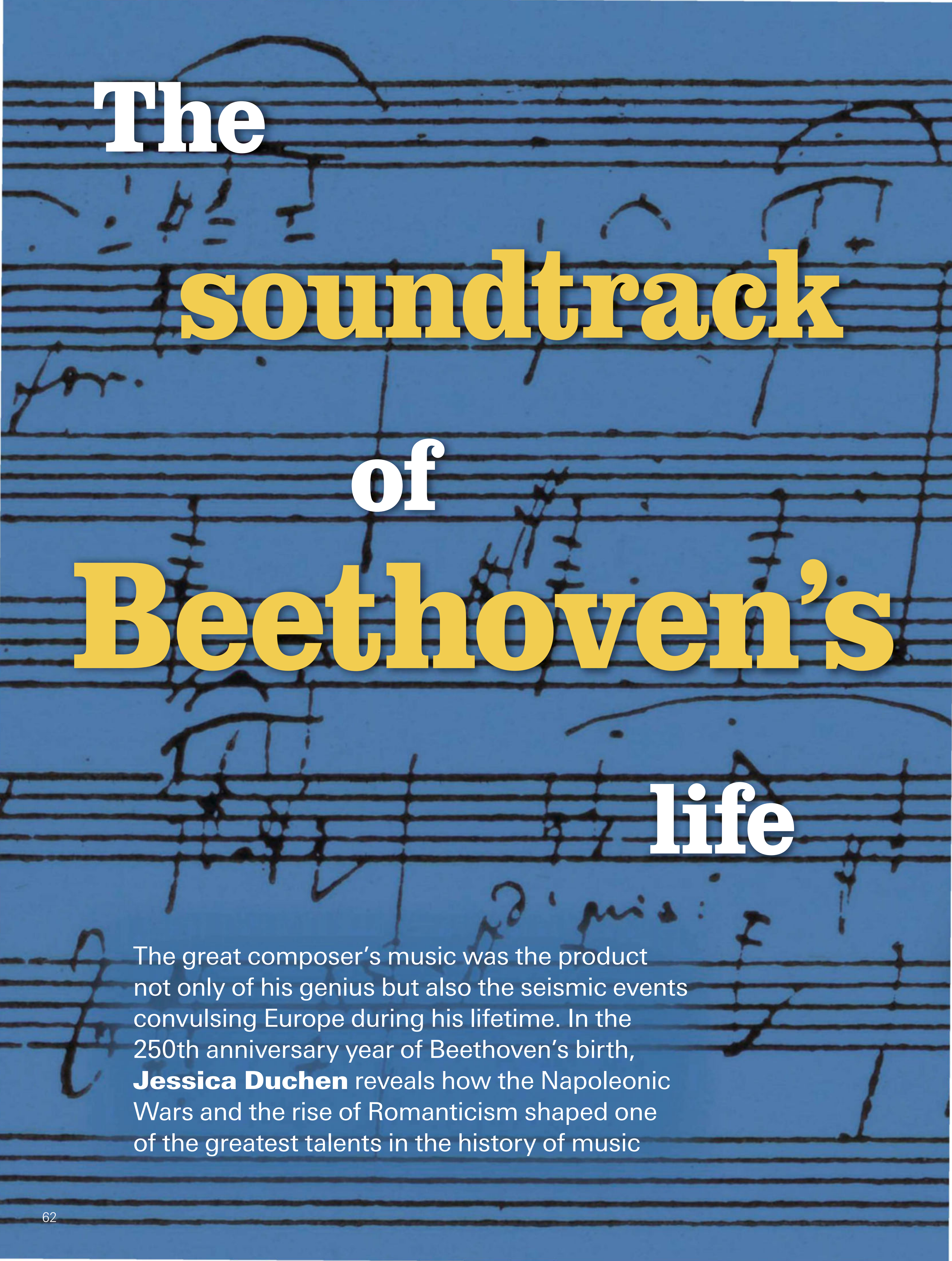
In 1865, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson became the first woman in Britain to openly qualify as a doctor (Margaret Bulkley had qualified 50 years earlier, but disguised as a man). After her attempts to study at a number of medical schools had been thwarted on account of her sex, **Anderson qualified via the Society of Apothecaries**, whose rules did not specifically forbid women from taking their examinations. Not everyone was thrilled at Anderson's achievement however, and the society shortly after changed its rules to prevent such a thing from happening again.



Clash of arms

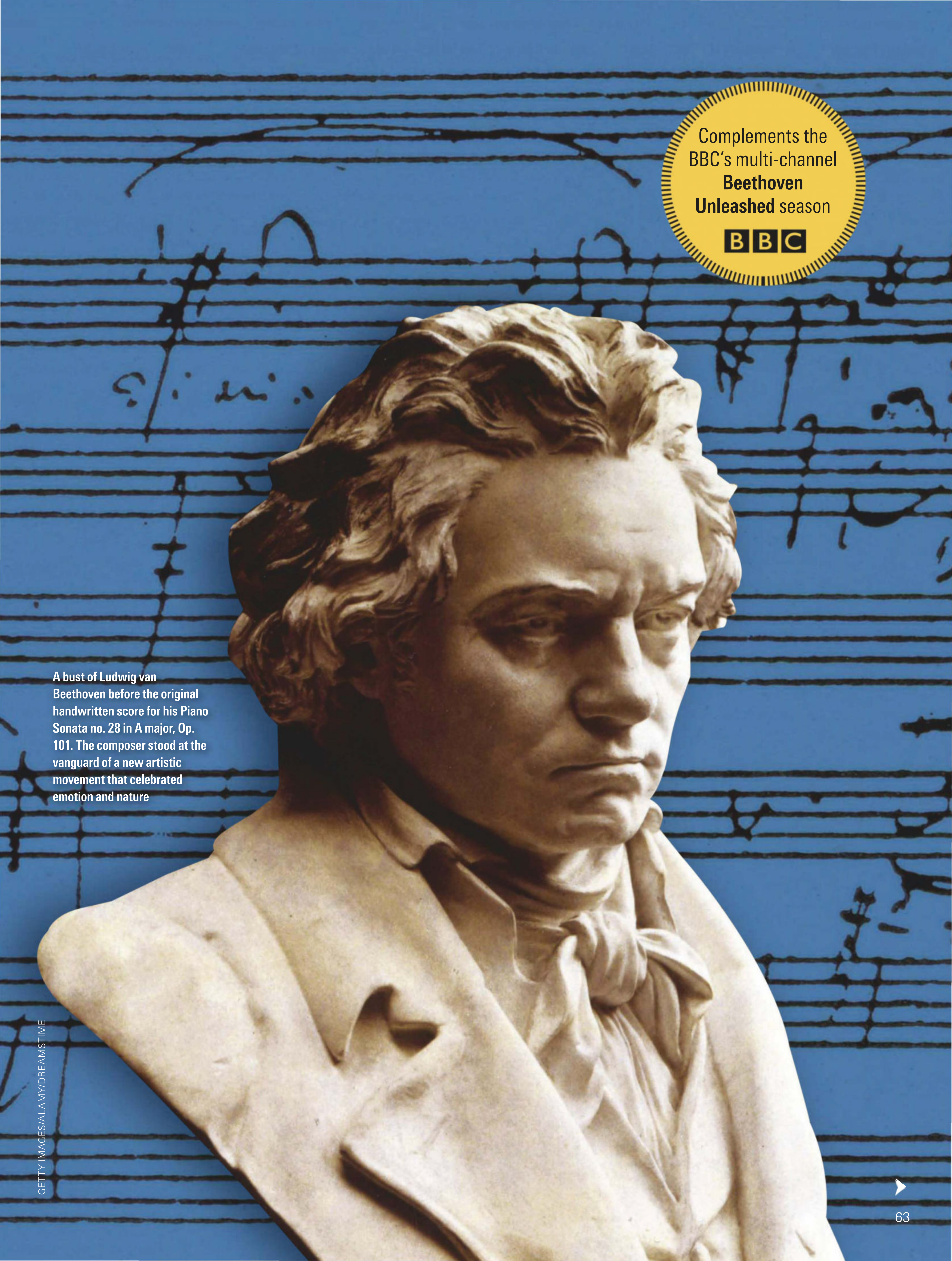
Richard II's invasion of Scotland in 1385 was dogged by controversy when **two knights, Richard Scrope and Robert Grosvenor, turned up bearing the same coat of arms**. In the legal case that followed, both men argued that their families had been first to bear a blue shield blazoned with a diagonal gold line. After four years and more than 300 witness statements (including one by Chaucer), the court found in favour of Scrope, and Grosvenor was forced to change his arms. H

Julian Humphrys, author and journalist, specialising in history



The soundtrack of Beethoven's life

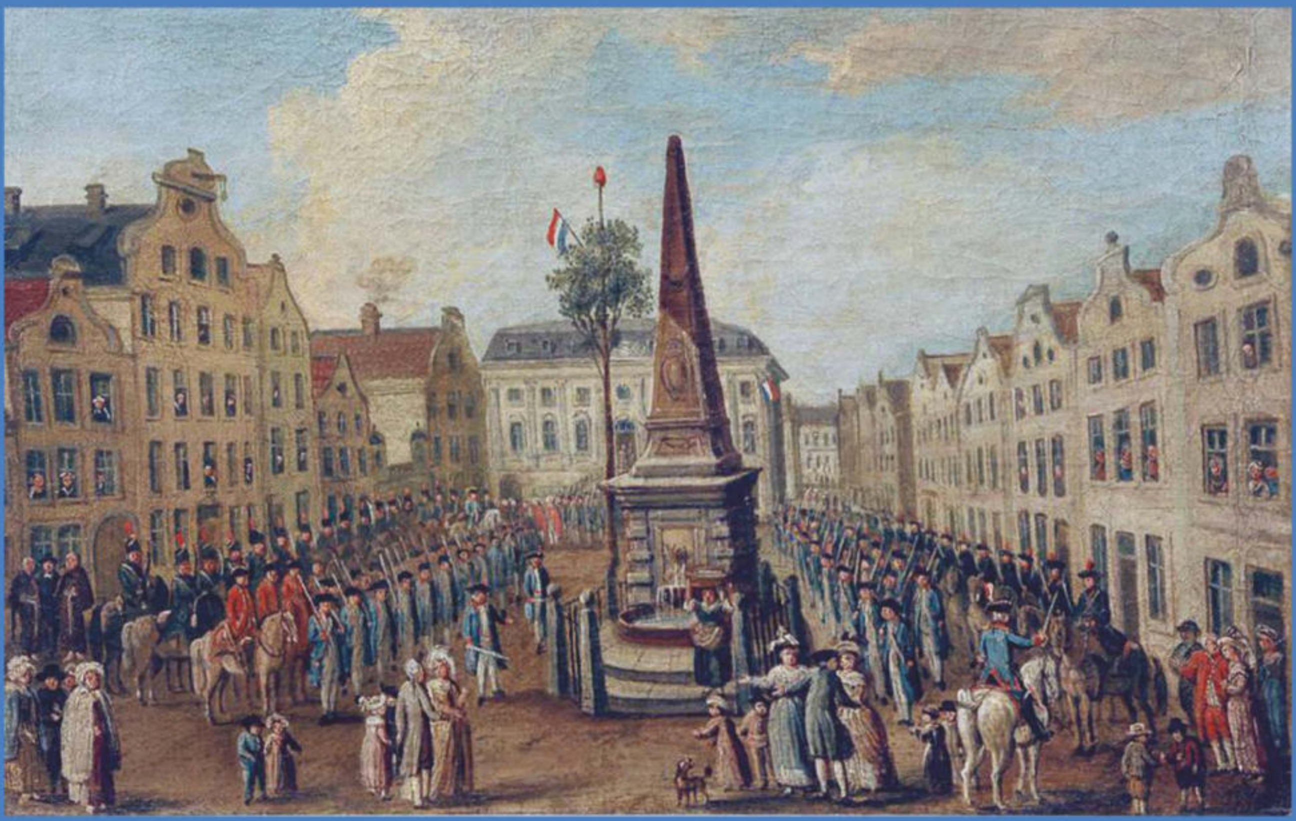
The great composer's music was the product not only of his genius but also the seismic events convulsing Europe during his lifetime. In the 250th anniversary year of Beethoven's birth, **Jessica Duchen** reveals how the Napoleonic Wars and the rise of Romanticism shaped one of the greatest talents in the history of music



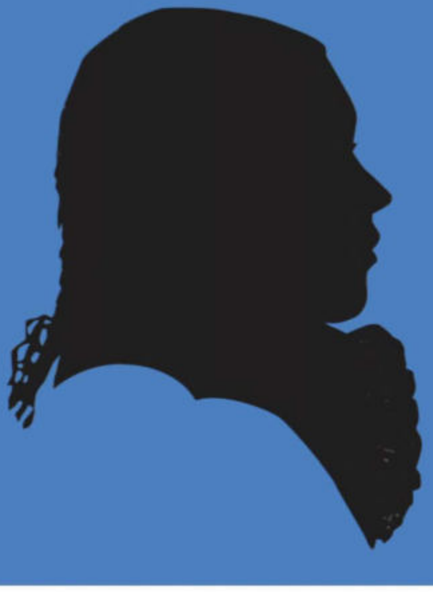
Complements the BBC's multi-channel **Beethoven Unleashed** season

A bust of Ludwig van Beethoven before the original handwritten score for his Piano Sonata no. 28 in A major, Op. 101. The composer stood at the vanguard of a new artistic movement that celebrated emotion and nature

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY/DREAMSTIME



The shadow of war
French troops occupy Bonn in October 1794 as conflict consumes Europe. Beethoven loved the town of his birth but, following Napoleon's invasion, would never see it again



Genius in profile
The earliest known portrait of Beethoven, aged 16. The young Ludwig travelled to Vienna to receive instruction from Mozart but had to return home to be with his ailing mother

AKG IMAGES/ALAMY/BRIDGEMAN

"Beethoven's music… opens up to us the kingdom of the gigantic and the immeasurable… [it] moves the lever controlling horror, fear, dread, pain and awakens that infinite longing that is the essence of Romanticism." So wrote the author ETA Hoffmann in 1810, after falling under the spell of Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No 5.

This assessment might have been news to the composer. He had come of age during the *Aufklärung*, the age of Reason (when scepticism, rationality and an adherence to the laws of science became the west's dominant philosophy). Yet today, as the world celebrates the 250th anniversary of his birth, Beethoven can seem more a creature of the Romantics (a new wave of artists who celebrated emotion, nature and the past) than he would ever have considered himself. He was both a pioneer of his art and inescapably a child of his time.

Musical heritage

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn on (probably) 16 December 1770, the eldest surviving son of Johann van Beethoven, a musician employed by the archbishop of Cologne. Ludwig's Flemish-born grandfather, also called Ludwig, had been Kapellmeister in Bonn, head of music to the town, an influential figure of whose heritage his youthful namesake was proud.

The younger Ludwig had far less confidence in his father, though. Johann tried to turn the gifted lad into a performing prodigy; no wonder Beethoven later had a problem with authority figures attempting to coerce him to a piano. Ludwig did, though, receive valuable support from his composition teacher, Christian Gottlob Neefe, and the Elector Max Franz, who funded a trip to Vienna so that Ludwig could audition for Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

In Vienna, any plans Beethoven had to study with Mozart were soon shattered: upon hearing that his mother was gravely ill, Beethoven rushed back to Bonn to be with her. After her death his father lapsed into alcoholism; his two younger brothers were still schoolboys, and the 17-year-old musician had to take charge of the family and its finances. By the time he returned to Vienna in 1792, Mozart, too, had died. Count Waldstein, a crucial patron in Bonn, sent Beethoven on his way to study instead with Joseph Haydn, exhorting him to "receive the spirit of Mozart from the hands of Haydn".

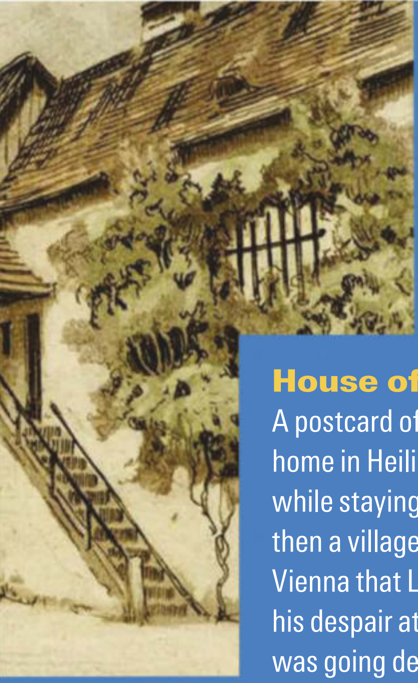
Beethoven loved his native town, with its spacious university, intellectual population and broad, open-hearted riverscapes. But he never saw it again.

Two years later, in 1794, Napoleon Bonaparte counted Bonn among his conquests and absorbed it into the first French empire. It seems all the more extraordinary, then, that Napoleon remained for some while Beethoven's personal hero. It is not that the composer approved of the French Revolution's bloody aftermath. It was more that he admired Napoleon as a powerful self-made leader and free man, the type of individual Beethoven himself aspired to be.

Beethoven certainly espoused the ideals of *liberté* and *fraternité* – and he was more concerned with *égalité* than has sometimes been recognised. In a 1795 letter that has only come to light recently, the composer wrote to a friend who was travelling to Russia: "So you are now in the cold land where mankind is still treated so much beneath its dignity… you will encounter many things there which are contrary to your way of thinking… When will the time come when there will only be people? [ie, without such divisions in society.]" That time seemed further away than ever when Napoleon declared himself emperor in 1804; Beethoven appears to have been much disillusioned.

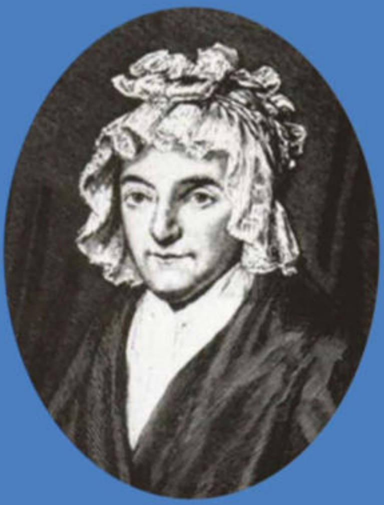
Sporting high ideals and self-belief to match, the straight-talking, hot-tempered young musician from the Rhineland settled in Vienna, the Habsburg capital: a city of palaces and princes, where social graces and pretensions were paramount.

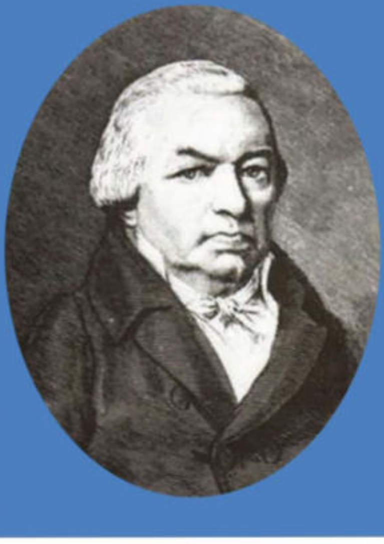
By now Europe was waking up to Beethoven's genius, and he was widely spoken of as the successor to Mozart. However, to the aristocratic patrons in whose salons he first established himself, his uncouth ways – no wig, no respect for mealtimes – appeared



House of pain

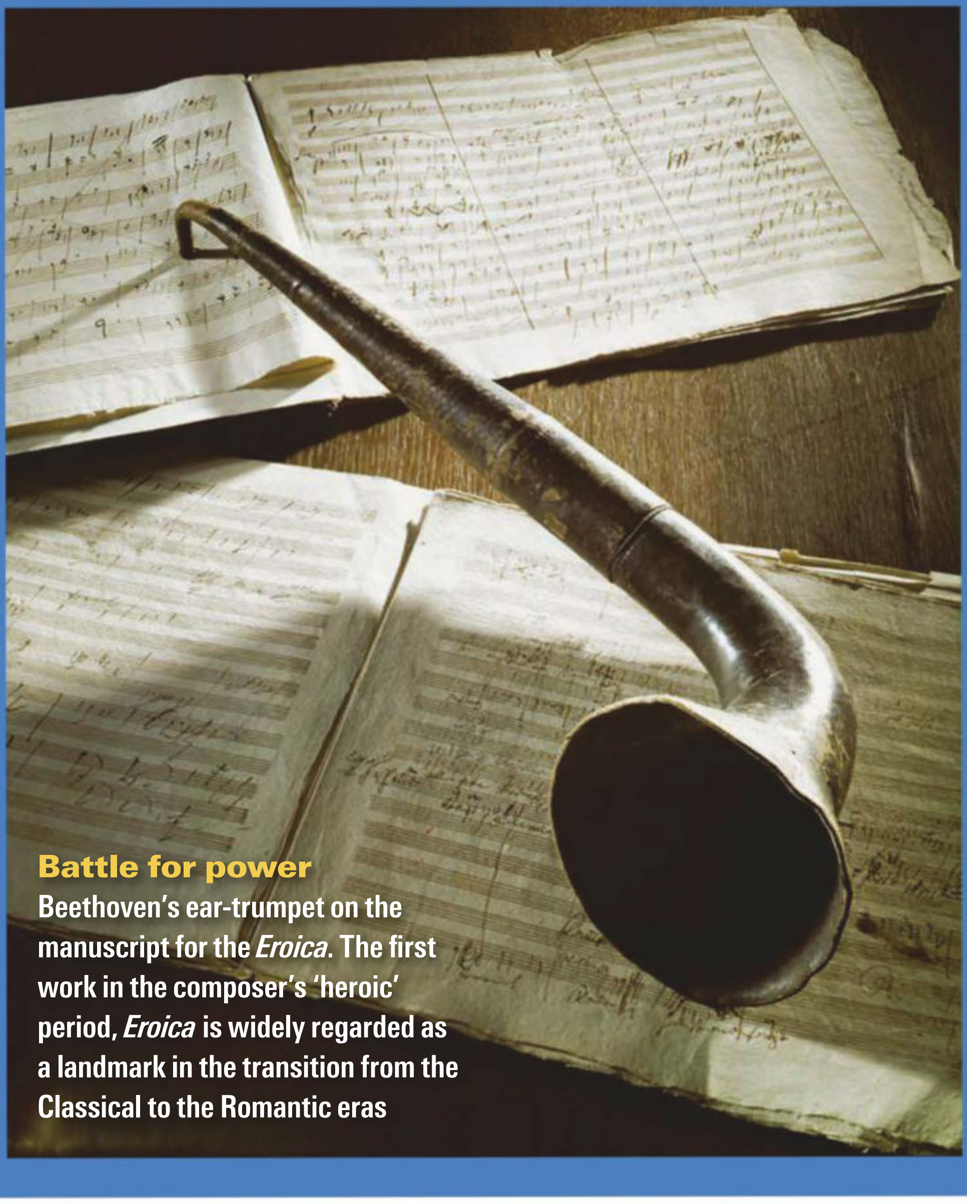
A postcard of Beethoven's home in Heiligenstadt. It was while staying in what was then a village just outside Vienna that Ludwig wrote of his despair at the fact that he was going deaf





Painful inheritance

Portraits of Beethoven's parents, Maria Magdalena Keverich (above right) and Johann van Beethoven. Ludwig had a troubled relationship with his father, instilling in him a distrust of authority figures



Battle for power

Beethoven's ear-trumpet on the manuscript for the *Eroica*. The first work in the composer's 'heroic' period, *Eroica* is widely regarded as a landmark in the transition from the Classical to the Romantic eras

Beethoven resolved to "seize fate by the throat". The result was the birth of Romanticism in classical music

alien. The distaste was mutual. Beethoven lived in Vienna for more than 30 years, loathing it. "From the emperor to the bootblack, all the Viennese are worthless," he opined. He regarded them as dishonest, mean and unappreciative – even when newspapers called him "Europe's greatest composer".

The matter of how exactly to live as a 'great composer' at the 19th century's outset posed its own problems. Like Mozart, Beethoven rejected the typical status of the musician as a liveried court servant; he was determined to pursue an independent life as a proud freelancer. Yet this left him beholden to many different patrons, rather than just one, while the gulf between the nobility and commoners, entrenched via Austria's dual legal system – one law for aristocrats, another for everyone else – often proved the bane of his life.

An incident in 1806 highlights the problem. While Beethoven was staying at his patron Prince Lichnowsky's country palace, the aristocrat tried to force him to perform at a social function against his will. Beethoven stormed out, leaving a note: "You are a prince through circumstance of birth. I am what I am through myself alone. There are and have been thousands of princes. There is only one Beethoven." This fit of ego-fuelled rage lost him a quarter of his income – Lichnowsky had been paying him an annual stipend.

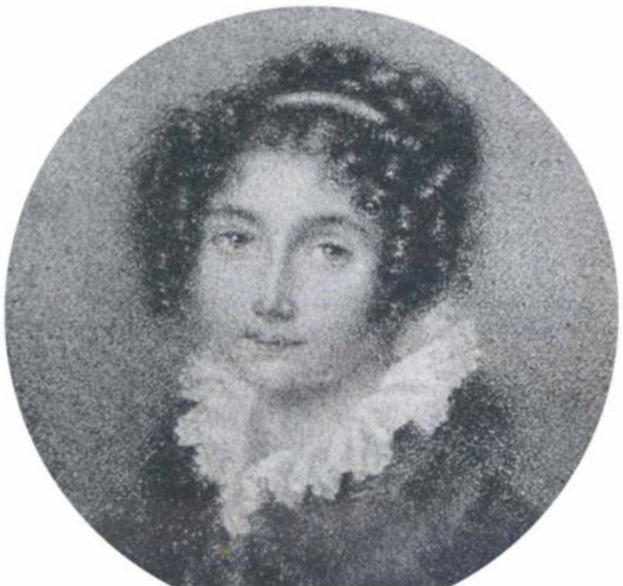
If Beethoven's resilience had been tested in Bonn too heavily, too young, a further, even more terrible blow awaited. In 1802 he spent the summer in the village of Heiligenstadt, lodging behind the bakery, and here wrote a document that was not revealed until after his death. The 'Heiligenstadt Testament' is partly a will, partly an outpouring of despair, addressed to his two brothers. The composer, still only in his early thirties, explains that he is going deaf and there might be no remedy (today, many believe he was suffering from a condition called Otosclerosis). His entire vocation depends upon his sense of hearing. He has contemplated suicide: "Only my art held me back," he wrote.

Having then resolved, as he earlier told a childhood friend, to "seize fate by the throat", Beethoven successfully rallied. He jettisoned his old methods of composition to seek "a new path" – one that would lead to the birth of Romanticism in classical music – which became known as his 'heroic' period. Its first manifestation was his Symphony No 3, the *Eroica*. Moreover, as composer-in-residence at the Theater an der Wien, he was throwing his energies into an opera, *Fidelio*, the story of a devoted wife who saves her husband from political imprisonment and murder.

An ardent courtship

Hope rose again in Beethoven's personal life, though too briefly. In 1799, two young Hungarian countesses, Therese and Josephine von Brunsvik, visiting Vienna with their mother, had approached Beethoven for piano lessons. The 20-year-old Josephine

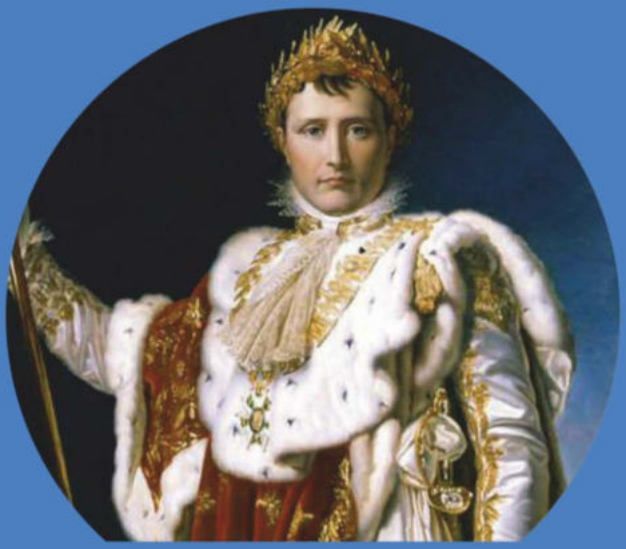
Beethoven fell in love with Countess Josephine von Brunsvik (below). But, fearing she would lose custody of her children if she remarried, she rejected him



ALAMY/AKG IMAGES/PUBLIC DOMAIN

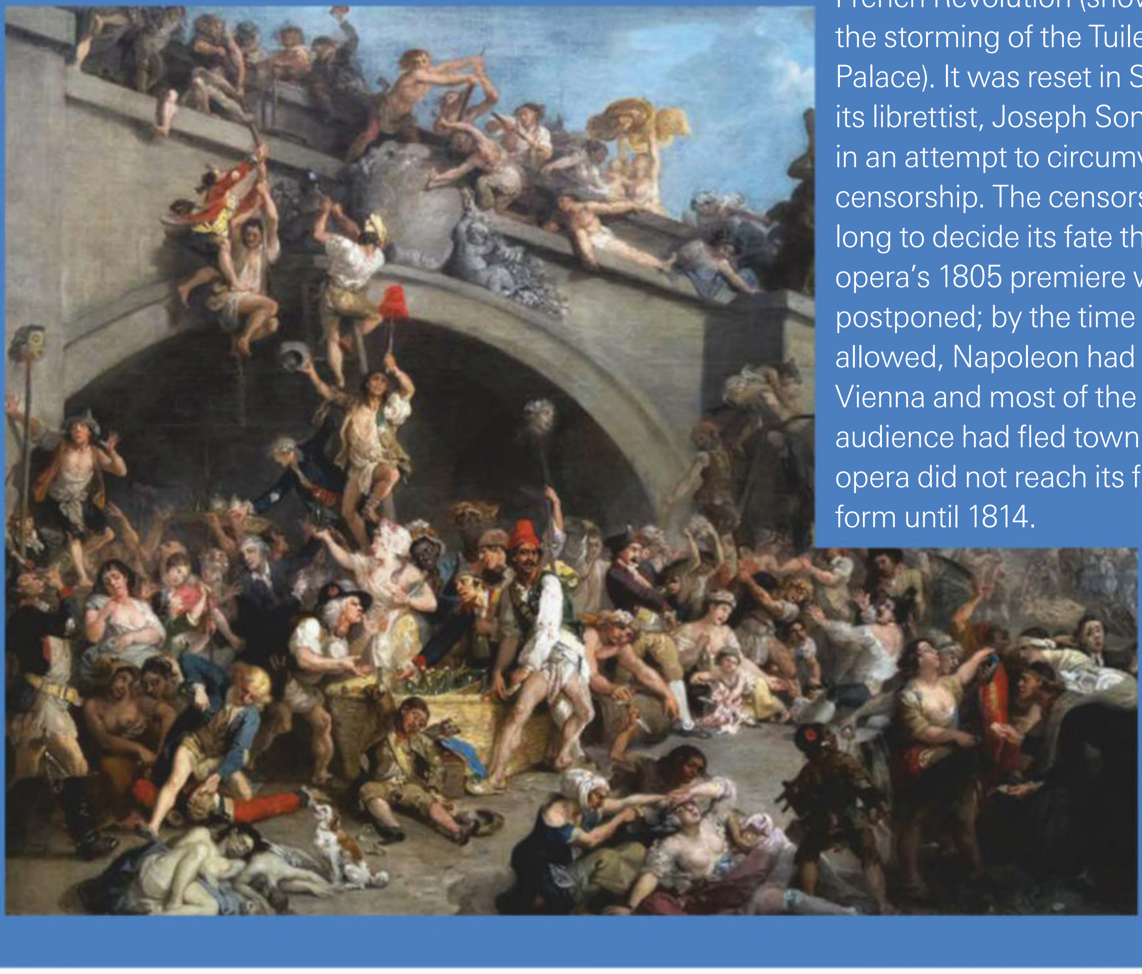
MASTERLY CREATIONS

The inspirations behind five of Beethoven's greatest works



1 A FALLEN HERO

Beethoven originally planned his Symphony No 3, *Eroica* – the first work of his 'new path' – to be entitled *Bonaparte*. On hearing that Napoleon had declared himself emperor (as shown above), Beethoven scrubbed out the dedication so hard that he left a hole in the page.



2 THE ACT OF REVOLUTION

Fidelio, Beethoven's sole opera, was inspired by true events in the French Revolution (shown left is the storming of the Tuileries Palace). It was reset in Spain by its librettist, Joseph Sonnleithner, in an attempt to circumvent state censorship. The censors took so long to decide its fate that the opera's 1805 premiere was postponed; by the time it was allowed, Napoleon had invaded Vienna and most of the likely audience had fled town. The opera did not reach its final form until 1814.

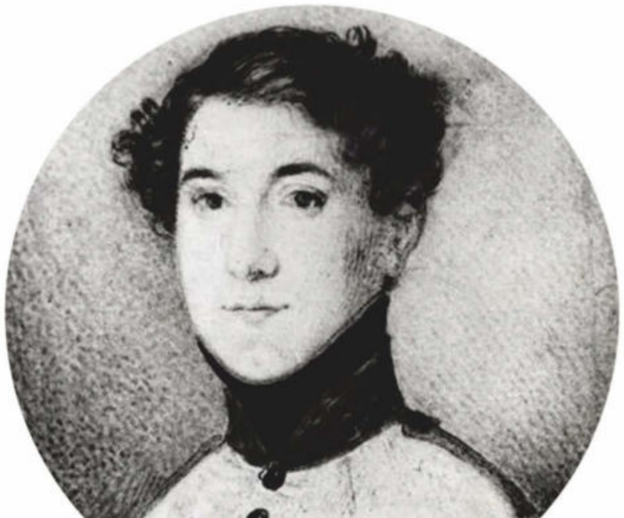
caught his eye, but weeks later she was married off to Count Joseph Deym, owner of a waxworks museum. During these years the friendship continued; Deym even commissioned music from Beethoven for a mechanical organ in his gallery.

After Deym died in 1804, leaving Josephine widowed with four small children, Beethoven rushed into an ardent courtship. In 1957, 13 of his love letters to her were published for the first time, demonstrating a desperate infatuation. Josephine was nevertheless obliged to reject him; had she married a commoner, the aristocratic law would have removed her custody of her children.

By the time the censors cleared *Fidelio* for performance in 1805, Napoleon had invaded Vienna. The opera was premiered to less than sterling success and – with many of Vienna's residents having fled the city – and only a smattering of listeners. The next day, Beethoven's friends and patrons gathered to beg him to rework it; only when Prince Lichnowsky's mother went down on bended knee did he agree. Though the new version, *Leonore*, was performed in 1806, the work did not reach its final form until 1814. By then, the world had changed almost beyond recognition; Beethoven was obliged to change with it.

As Napoleon's guns bombarded Vienna, Beethoven pressed pillows over his ears to protect what was left of his hearing

In 1815, Beethoven became embroiled in an ill-fated battle to win custody of his nephew Karl, shown below



Under Napoleon's thumb

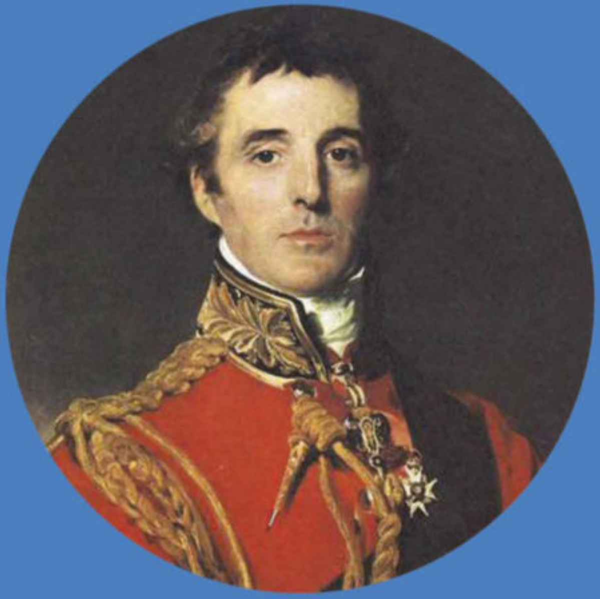
In 1809 Napoleon's armies invaded Vienna again, and this time French forces bombarded the city walls with 20 howitzers. The appalling noise sent the composer rushing to safety in his brother's basement, where he pressed pillows over his ears to protect what was left of his hearing. But more still was at stake, for Napoleon was overturning the world order of a thousand years. The Holy Roman Empire was finished, Emperor Francis II was deprived of much of his power, and Austria was under Napoleon's thumb, obliged to contribute thousands of men to his armies, including for the disastrous Russian campaign of 1812.

Amid the turbulence, runaway inflation led in 1811 to the devaluation of the Austrian paper currency to a fifth of its former worth. Beethoven had depended since 1809 on an annual stipend provided jointly by Prince Kinsky, Prince Lobkowitz and the Archduke Rudolph, but now at least two of them had been virtually ruined. Travelling in summer 1812 to the spa town of Teplitz on medical advice, Beethoven stopped in Prague, where he met Prince Kinsky and achieved an advance of 600 florins. There, on 3 July, he cancelled dinner with a friend due to unexpected circumstances, for which we must turn again to the strange case of Josephine Deym.

Josephine had been seduced by her sons' tutor, Baron Christoph von Stackelberg, and fell pregnant out of wedlock. Reluctantly she married Stackelberg in 1810, but the couple fell upon hard times and by summer 1812 the marriage was on the rocks.

On 6 July Beethoven wrote an extraordinary love letter. It was discovered, together with the Heiligenstadt Testament, in his apartment after his death. It is addressed only to someone he terms his "Immortal Beloved". Nine months later, on 8 April 1813, Josephine

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY/PUBLIC DOMAIN

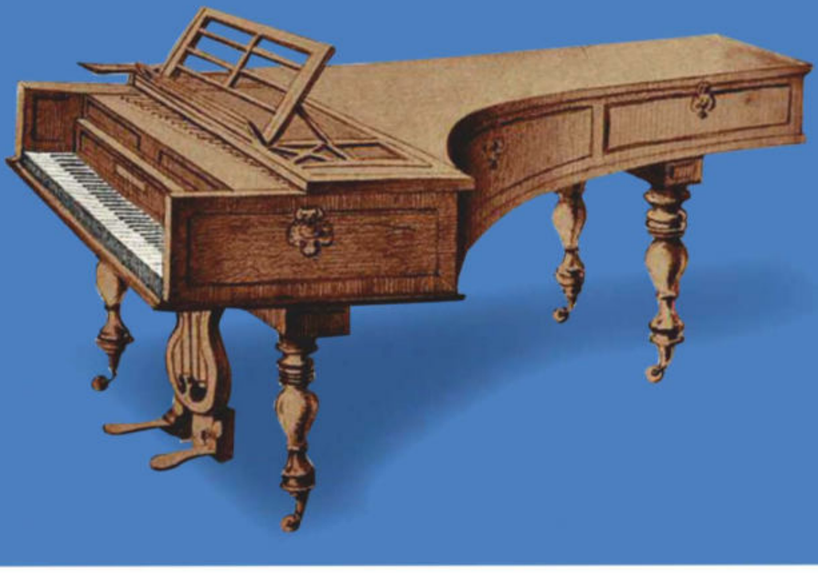


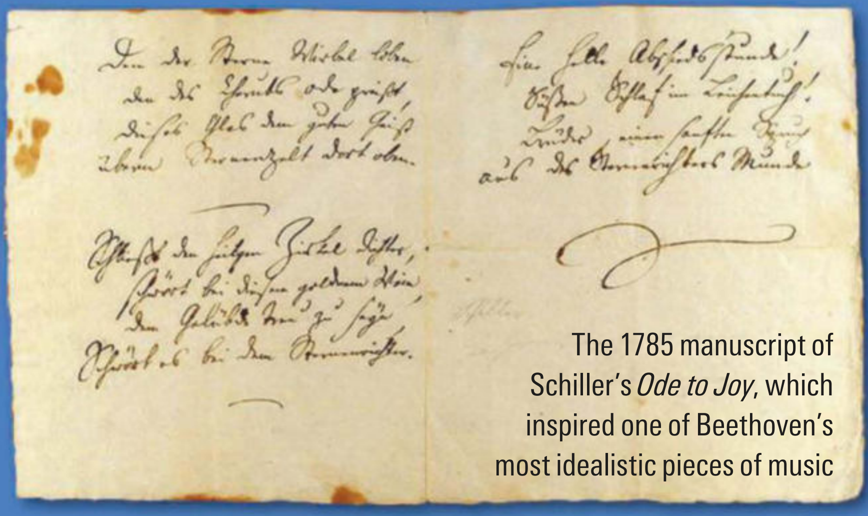
3 THE BATTLE CRY

Beethoven's 'Battle Symphony' was created for a contraption called a 'pantechnicon', which could imitate the sound of a full orchestra. But the instrument failed to achieve much, if any, popularity. Beethoven reset the piece for a real orchestra and, as *Wellington's Victory* (in honour of the British commander, above), premiered it alongside his Symphony No 7 in 1813, in a concert to raise money for the wounded of the battle of Hanau.

4 THE PACE-SETTER

The most ambitious of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas, the 'Hammerklavier' (the German word for a fortepiano) was completed in 1819 after the British piano firm John Broadwood sent him the biggest, strongest instrument he had ever owned (shown below). Beethoven gives the first movement an exceptionally fast tempo indication: 138 beats per minute.





The 1785 manuscript of Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, which inspired one of Beethoven's most idealistic pieces of music

5 THE ODE TO JOY

Schiller's *An die Freude* (*Ode to Joy*), written in 1785, was not merely the text for the last movement of Beethoven's Symphony No 9, but a long-standing obsession for the composer, although it was only in 1824 that he finally set it to music. It encapsulated his own ideals to an impressive degree: the longing for a world in which everyone, in Bacchanalian siblinghood, could love one another and sing for joy. Perhaps neither 'Enlightenment' nor 'Romantic', it transcends both.

gave birth to a daughter, whom she named Minona. Photographs of her reveal a startling likeness to portraits of Beethoven.

Josephine was unable to free herself from her marriage – and that had a terrible impact on her health and her finances. She died in 1821, aged 42.

Sour notes

Beethoven's entire modus vivendi was being upended by these seismic events, political and personal. Depressed, frequently ill and short of funds, to make ends meet he had to fulfil paid commissions or attempt works with overt popular appeal. Thus the prospect of 1814–15's Congress of Vienna (when statesmen discussed Europe's future following the Napoleonic Wars) propelled him into writing short-lived material such as a cantata entitled 'Der glorreiche Augenblick' (The Glorious Moment). This was conceived for a mechanical instrument known as a 'panharmonicon', developed by the inventor Johann Nepomuk Mälzel. Technology was galloping ahead in music as much as in other fields, from the design of pianos, which were becoming bigger and more powerful, to Mälzel's metronome, which enabled a piece's speed to be precisely indicated. Mälzel also developed ear trumpets, which Beethoven used as hearing aids.

He could no longer afford the Pasqualati House apartment and after 1815 took a seemingly endless series of smaller lodgings, sometimes moving on after only weeks. To make matters worse, following his brother's death in 1815 he embarked upon an ill-fated battle to adopt his nephew Karl, possibly attempting to fill the void left by the fact that he could not be a father to his natural child. The court case against his sister-in-law absorbed much energy over the next five years – and yet again the legal system's division of commoners and aristocracy proved his Achilles heel. For some reason, he had taken the case to the Landrecht, the Austrian aristocratic court, but while speaking there about Karl's schooling, he let slip that he would have liked to have sent him to a particular institution *had the boy been of noble birth*. Vienna was aghast at the public revelation that the celebrated Ludwig 'van' Beethoven was not in fact a noble-born 'von'.

But against this hidebound hinterland, nascent cultural forces were on the rise, more sympathetic to Beethoven's outlook and first detectable more in literature than music – for Beethoven was an avid reader. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, author of seminal works such as *Faust* and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, featured strongly among his literary influences. Others ranged from Shakespeare to Indian legends; from Christian Christoph Sturm, who praised God through the miracles of nature, to Immanuel Kant, whose *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) held a quote close to Beethoven's heart: "Two things awe me most: the starry sky above, the moral law within." Drama, religious awe, a passion for nature, a fascination with the exotic, and the overwhelming forces of emotion: these influences help to trace Beethoven's own path from the old world to the new.

Beethoven's music in his final eight years – including his last piano works, the Symphony No 9, the 'Missa Solemnis' and his five late string quartets – broke wholly new ground in terms of scale and ambition. Long before, he'd rejected his old methods in order to develop 'a new path'. Now it was as if he had rejected any path in favour of the freedom of the skies. Whether isolation within his deafness was partly responsible is still debated today.

No music like this had been heard before; little has matched it since. Perhaps this unique strength is what ultimately marks out Beethoven, with hindsight, as the first incarnation of Romanticism in music. Either way, the effect remains awe-inspiring. By the time he died of liver disease in 1827, aged 56, the stage was set for a century of musical creation transformed forever by his touch.

Jessica Duchen is a journalist and author. She is working on a novel about Beethoven, entitled *Immortal*, due to be published later this year

LISTEN The BBC is marking the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth with **Beethoven Unleashed**, a year-long season of programmes on BBC Four, Radio 3 and BBC Sounds. You'll find more details at: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0801f4y*

ONLINE Our sister publication **BBC Music Magazine** is running regular online pieces celebrating the Beethoven anniversary. You'll find those at *classical-music.com*

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

BBC

Collector's Edition

THE CRUSADES

FROM THE MAKERS OF BBC HiSTORY MAGAZINE

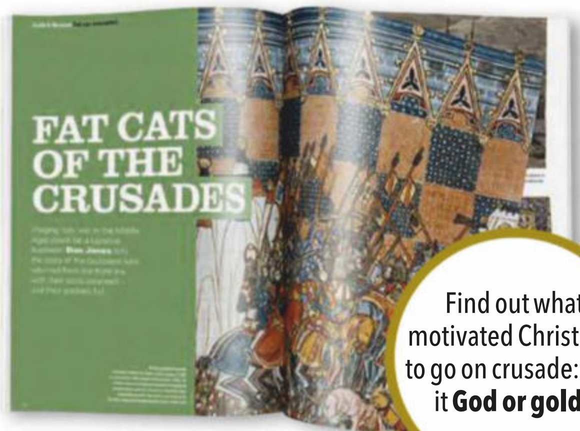
This in-depth special edition explores the stories behind the infamous medieval religious wars in the Holy Land and beyond. Discover:

- How the leaders of the First Crusade captured Jerusalem
- The fascinating relationship between Richard the Lionheart and his adversary Saladin
- How violent crusades against heresy unfolded thousands of miles from the Middle East
- The Islamic perspective of the crusades
- Expert analysis on the legacy of the crusades and their impact on the modern world

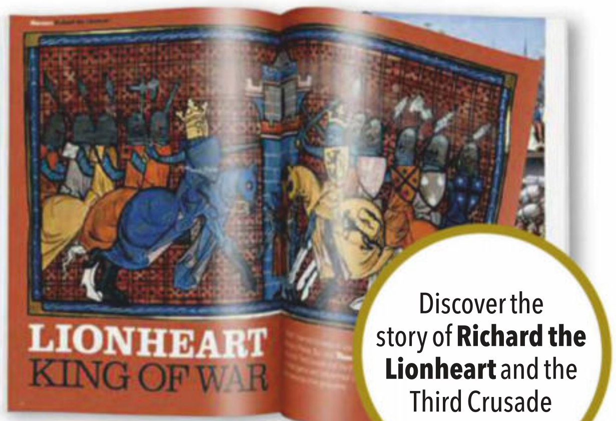
PLUS – receive FREE UK postage on this special edition!

BBC
Collector's Edition
THE CRUSADES
Launching the First Crusade
The Lionheart
The Eastern View
God's Elite Warriors
Saladin
The Barons' Crusade
Away from the Holy Land
THE MAKERS OF BBC HiSTORY MAGAZINE
£9.99

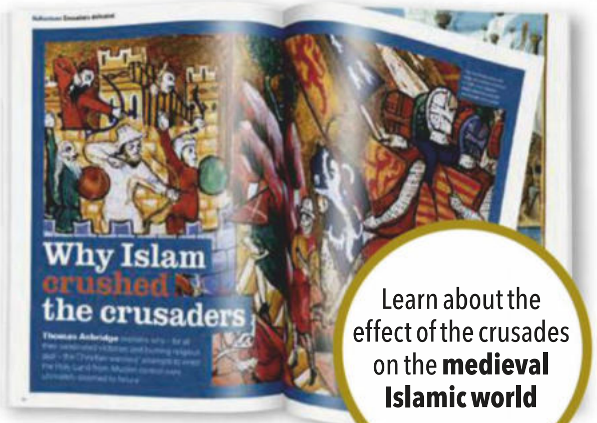
ONLY **£9.99** INCLUDING FREE P&P*


FAT CATS OF THE CRUSADES

Find out what motivated Christians to go on crusade: was it **God or gold?**


LIONHEART KING OF WAR

Discover the story of **Richard the Lionheart** and the Third Crusade


Why Islam crushed the crusaders

Learn about the effect of the crusades on the **medieval Islamic world**

Pre-order online **www.buysubscriptions.com/crusades**
or call us on **03330 162 138**+ and quote CRUSADES PRINT 1

+ UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 9am–5pm.
* FREE UK POSTAGE on this special edition on UK orders only. Prices including postage are: £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for the Rest of World. All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.

BOOKS

SOCIAL

"An ostensibly dull slice of economic history– coal – is turned into a human story that touches us all"

Emma Griffin reviews Ruth Goodman's *The Domestic Revolution* › page 77

EUROPE

"There was always something deceptive about the Habsburg dynasty's pomp and propaganda"

Mark Cornwall reviews Martyn Rady's *The Habsburgs: The Rise and Fall of a World Power* › page 74

GEORGIAN

"The Byrons fought, seduced and squandered their way through 18th-century Europe"

Joseph Crawford reads *The Fall of the House of Byron* by Emily Brand › page 77

SECOND WORLD WAR

"Fascist Italy was always lacking in the resources to pursue the ambitions of its leadership"

David Laven gives his opinion on John Gooch's *Mussolini's War* › page 76

FICTION

"The saying, 'There's nowt as queer as folk' could not be more apposite for the house of Plantagenet"

Ben Kane discusses his new historical adventure story *Lionheart* › page 77

FRAN MONKS

"Death didn't care if you were a butcher's boy or a public schoolboy"

JOHN NICHOL talks to Rob Attar about his new book, which tells the story of the Lancaster bomber, and the men who flew, fought and died in it during the Second World War

Rob Attar: What were the origins of the Lancaster bomber? Why was it needed?
John Nichol: At the start of the Second World War, the Royal Air Force's offensive capability was quite limited. It soon became clear that the RAF needed bigger, better and more powerful bombers that could carry much greater loads. Now, what we're really talking about are weapons to kill people and destroy things. And the early bombers weren't doing that enough. They weren't achieving what the politicians and military leaders wanted, which was to take the war to the heart of Germany. With the Lancaster bomber that's what they were able to do, thanks to its range and its massive weapons load.

How much of a challenge was it to build Lancasters in the quantities required?
A huge challenge. Just look at a modern car production line with all of its automation, computer technology and mass production facilities. Then imagine trying to do all of that by hand, rivet by rivet. The men and women who built 7,377 Lancasters in massive production facilities were undertaking a mammoth task.

Why did the Lancaster become the pre-eminent British bomber?
Numbers. It went into service with so many squadrons. It's talked about in the same breath as the Spitfire, and in many ways, we talk about it so much because we know so much about it. Many Bomber Command veterans who flew the Halifax, for instance, will tell you that their contribution was as important, but the simple fact is that the Lancaster was produced in huge numbers and was involved in some of the most important and notorious raids.

JOHN NICHOL
LANCASTER
The Forging of a Very British Legend

Lancaster: The Forging of a Very British Legend
by John Nichol
(Simon and Schuster, 464 pages, £20)

What were the most significant raids the Lancaster took part in?
People always ask that question but I don't think that you can answer it. Take the Dambusters, which is probably the raid that the most people will have heard of. Was it one of the key raids of the war? In terms of what it achieved, certainly not. In terms of showing what Britain could do, possibly. In terms of the way that the heroism of the crews was idolised, yes it was important. But you can't look at any one operation, or aspect of the war, in isolation.

Sir Arthur Harris, the chief of Bomber Command, called the Lancaster his shining sword and a key weapon in winning the Second World War. But could you say the Lancaster was more important than the Arctic convoys or the troops that stormed the beaches on D-Day? I don't think you can. So while I couldn't pick out one operation, taking the war to the heart of Germany – which is what Bomber Command did from the first day of the war to the last – was the crucial thing.

What kind of men flew in the Lancasters?
You can't sum them up because they were everything from factory workers to public schoolboys. You had draftsmen, cooks and bottle washers. And the delight for me of reading their accounts is how they all came together, in a totally arbitrary way, when they crewed up. They chose, by the cut of their jib, by the look of the other chaps, who they were going to live with, fight with and possibly die with. And there was no rhyme or reason about who was going to live or die during the war. Death didn't care if you were a butcher's boy or a public schoolboy.

And not all of the crews were from Britain, were they?
They came from all over the empire, and across the world. Many hailed from New Zealand, Australia and Canada. People of colour who came from the Caribbean made an incredible contribution. One of these guys, Cy Grant, was shot down and became a prisoner of war in Stalag Luft III, the home of the Great Escape. He was one of the first black prisoners of war and the Germans could barely believe it. He ended up on the front page of one of their newspapers, which called him an airman "of indeterminate race". They didn't know what to make of him.

What kind of relationships were forged by Lancaster crews?
The personal relationships that bonded crews together were astonishing. They trained together, lived together, fought together and, in some cases, died together. Obviously, the only people that you can interview are those who survived, and all of those I spoke to over the years talked about their love for their crew, how they worked together as a team. And I think that almost certainly had something to do with their survival. You have to have total trust in all of your friends around you if you're going to make it.

What view did the people you spoke to have of the Lancaster as an aircraft?
Pilots loved it as a flying machine; they talked about the way it flew like a fighter. They loved the way it handled. It was a hardy aircraft, which could take severe punishment. And in a number of cases people said that, if it wasn't for the Lancaster, they wouldn't be alive today.

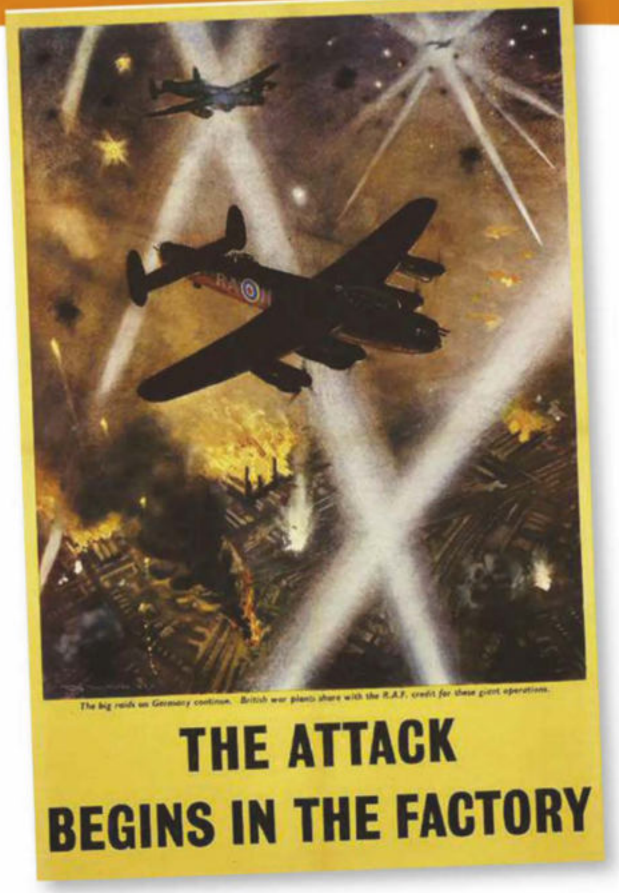
But it did have downsides. You might think of this giant aircraft

JOHN NICHOL

PROFILE

John Nichol is a historian, author and RAF veteran who was captured and paraded on Iraqi television during the Gulf War, before returning to active service. He has since written several works of military history as well as a number of novels, and is a regular commentator on military affairs with a wingspan of 102 feet, but inside it's like being in an aluminium tube, full of racks of equipment. You hit your shoulders on the equipment stations and knock your head on all the stuff that's hanging down. If you've ever been caving and tried to get through a letterbox in a cave, it's like that.

Now can you imagine doing that in the middle of flak, when the aircraft is in a spin or in flames? If you're in a Lancaster in a flat spin, you could be under 6, 7, 8 or even 9 G-Force. And you could be stuck on the roof or on the floor or against the bulkhead. Can you imagine trying to get out of a Lancaster under 7 or 8G when it's on fire, or when there are holes in it? When your mates are dead at the other end of the aircraft? Going to war in a Lancaster was an astonishing experience, there's no doubt.


The big raids on Germany continue. British war plants share with the R.A.F. credit for these giant operations.
THE ATTACK
BEGINS IN THE FACTORY

Britain's war machine
Bomber planes were produced in huge numbers in British factories, as highlighted by this wartime propaganda poster

The bomber gets through A ground crew check the bombs in a Lancaster, 1944. It had the power and range to devastate German cities

Bomber Command was one of the most perilous places to be in the war. Could you give us a sense of what the dangers were?

Of the 7,377 Lancasters built, over half were lost in bombing ops or training accidents. And of the 125,000 people who served in Bomber Command as a whole, just over 55,000 were killed. Another 10,000 were shot down and became prisoners of war, and 8,500 were injured. So that meant that if you served in Bomber Command, you had about a 40 per cent chance of getting through the war unscathed. Can you imagine that now? Just think of the prime minister in the heart of the Falklands War or Iraq or Afghanistan saying that we had lost 60 per cent of our fighting force.

Then look at some of the raids Bomber Command undertook. Rightly, we remember the heroism of the Battle of Britain, where 544 men from Fighter Command were killed over a four-month period. But on *one night* in Bomber Command, on a raid to Nuremberg in March 1944, more men died than in the whole of the Battle of Britain. That tells you something about the dangers involved.

There's one story in the book that really hooks onto this. A crew is attacking Berlin in 1943 as part of the Pathfinder Force. They've got green flares that they're going to drop to mark the targets. And the pilot is describing how he is in on the bomb run and the flak's coming up around them. Suddenly there's a massive explosion and everything in the aircraft stops working. He loses all intercom, all contact with his crew. And the pilot describes how the aircraft turns green. What's happened is some flak has hit the bomb bay and the green marker flares have exploded.

He knows that the aircraft is finished. All he can do is keep control of the aircraft in the hope his crew can bail out. And he says to himself: "We've practised this on the ground. They can all bail out in 30 to 40 seconds and so I have to count to 30 seconds. I know I'm going to die. I have to sacrifice my life so that my crew can get out." And he starts to count. One, two. The green flames are coming towards him through the back of the aircraft. Five, Six. The flames are licking up between his control column and his instrument panel.

He gets to 17, 18, and the next thing he knows, the aircraft is gone. He is sitting above Berlin with his hands forward – there's no control column there anymore. There's no aircraft there anymore. There's no seat. He's in a sitting position over Berlin, falling down towards the flak and the flames. His aircraft has simply exploded. All of his crew are immediately killed by the blast. He's been thrown out of the aircraft, and luckily, he's got his parachute on. And he manages to pull his parachute and – because he's at 20,000 feet – he's got seven or eight minutes to float down into the heart of Berlin.

This pilot sadly died last year, but I spoke to him about his experiences, and he said: "On the way down, all I could think about was my crew. I still think about them every night and what I could have done better. Could I have saved their lives?" Of course he couldn't. But that bond between the crew was there all the time.

What kind of reception would this pilot have received in Germany? How were prisoners from bombing raids treated?

They had a rough time, but on most occasions they were looked after. They were handed up through the system and ended up in prisoner of war camps. There were also occasions where crews were simply murdered, strung up from lampposts, hanged in barns, or shot by enraged German civilians. But bearing in mind how many were shot down, those numbers are probably relatively small.

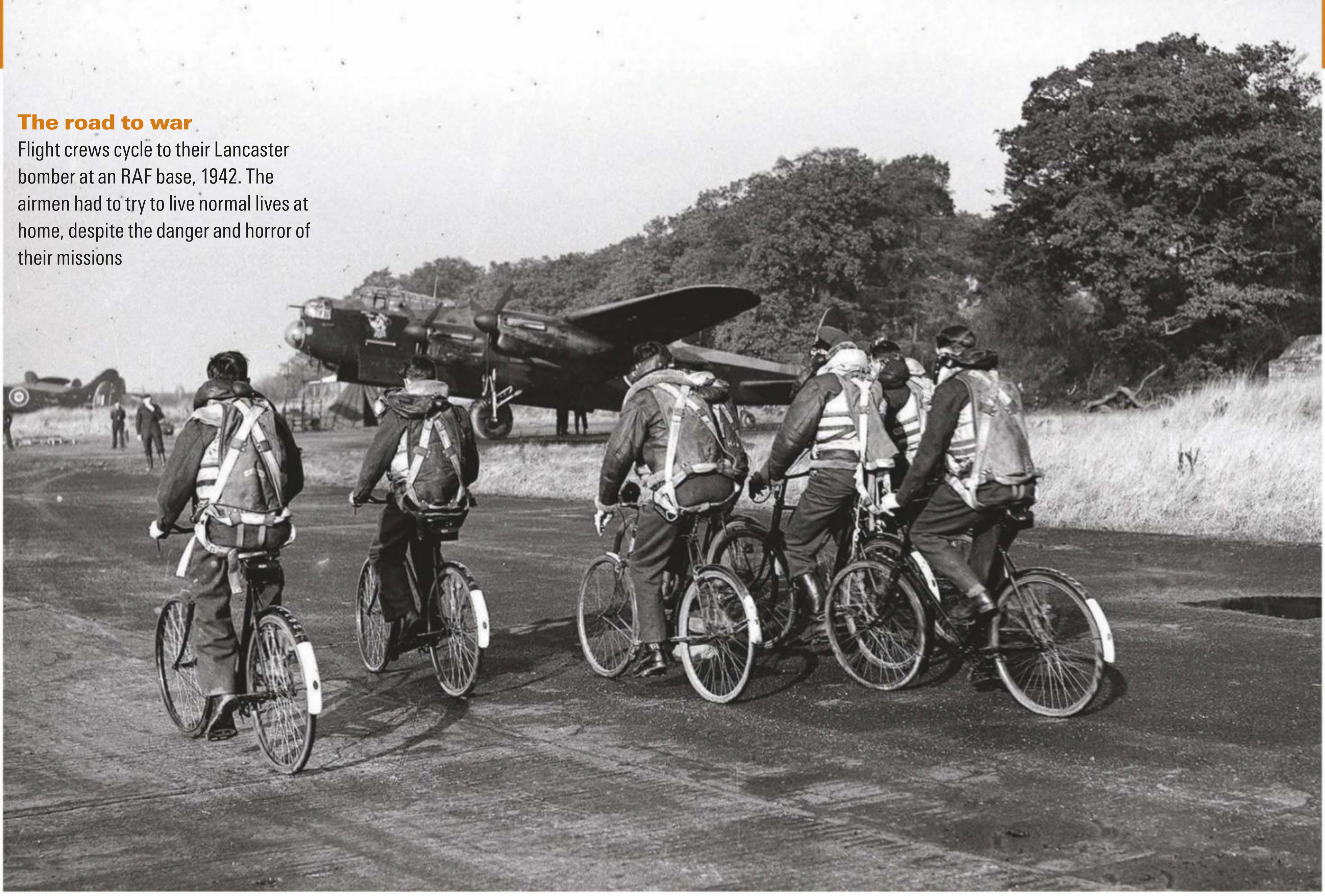
And we shouldn't forget that it also happened here. There are contemporary accounts of German aircrew being shot down and lynched in Britain, again in small numbers. But you can imagine that if you've seen your home blasted apart, your children die amid rubble, then you're going to be enraged. And sometimes in war, when that happens, horrific things occur.

How did their work affect bomber crews' lives at home?

For the most part they tried to get on with their lives. There's a story in the book where a crew are heading over their target and another Lancaster drops its bombs, which go through one of the wings of their aircraft and the rear turret. Their rear gunner is killed outright. So

> **"The next thing he knows, the aircraft is gone. He's in a sitting position over Berlin falling down towards the flak and the flames. His aircraft has simply exploded"**

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES



The road to war

Flight crews cycle to their Lancaster bomber at an RAF base, 1942. The airmen had to try to live normal lives at home, despite the danger and horror of their missions

GETTY IMAGES

they come back and have to report all of this and then go back home to their wives and girlfriends for dinner. That was tough for them, but they were a hardy lot. As many of them said: "What else could we do?"

Now, there were some who did say: "We can't go on." Some men had mental or physical breakdowns and the air force at the time was not good at coping with this. They used the term 'lack of moral fibre', which basically meant cowardice. If you had a breakdown because of the dangers you'd faced and the things you'd seen, you weren't helped much. There are a couple of accounts where the whole of a station was called out to witness a poor RAF officer or sergeant having his badges of rank and medals torn off him to set an example. It was a terrible thing to do. But that's the way the military coped then.

The bombing raids caused devastation across Germany. How aware were the crews of what was happening on the ground, and how did it affect them?

It depended on who you spoke to, at what point of the war and what they had experienced themselves. There are a number of stories of crews looking down on a burning Cologne, Dresden or Hamburg in horror and thinking: "What is going on down there? What are those poor people going through?" I've also got accounts in the book describing what it was like on the ground, and it's heartrending to hear people talking about bodies melting, the road melting in front of them and watching the skin fall off their hands.

Some of the men said that it was simply what had to be done, that's the way the war was fought then. Using the weapon of hindsight, which wasn't available at the time, you can argue about whether some of this was right or wrong. But back then it was the only means of taking the war to the heart of Germany.

After the war, how did those who'd flown Lancasters adjust to life back in civilian society?

They had little choice but to adjust, because the war was over. That sounds a bit bland, but everybody had been to war and so people weren't interested in what you had done. Some of the men who returned to their day jobs were literally told: "We don't want to hear your war stories. We're not interested in that. We simply need to get back to normality."

This was also not a generation that spoke openly about their feelings. Many suffered what we would now recognise as post-traumatic stress disorder, but that wasn't recognised then and they simply had to get on with their lives. At the back of their minds, many didn't understand why they had feelings of anger or sorrow, or on certain days they would feel emotional.

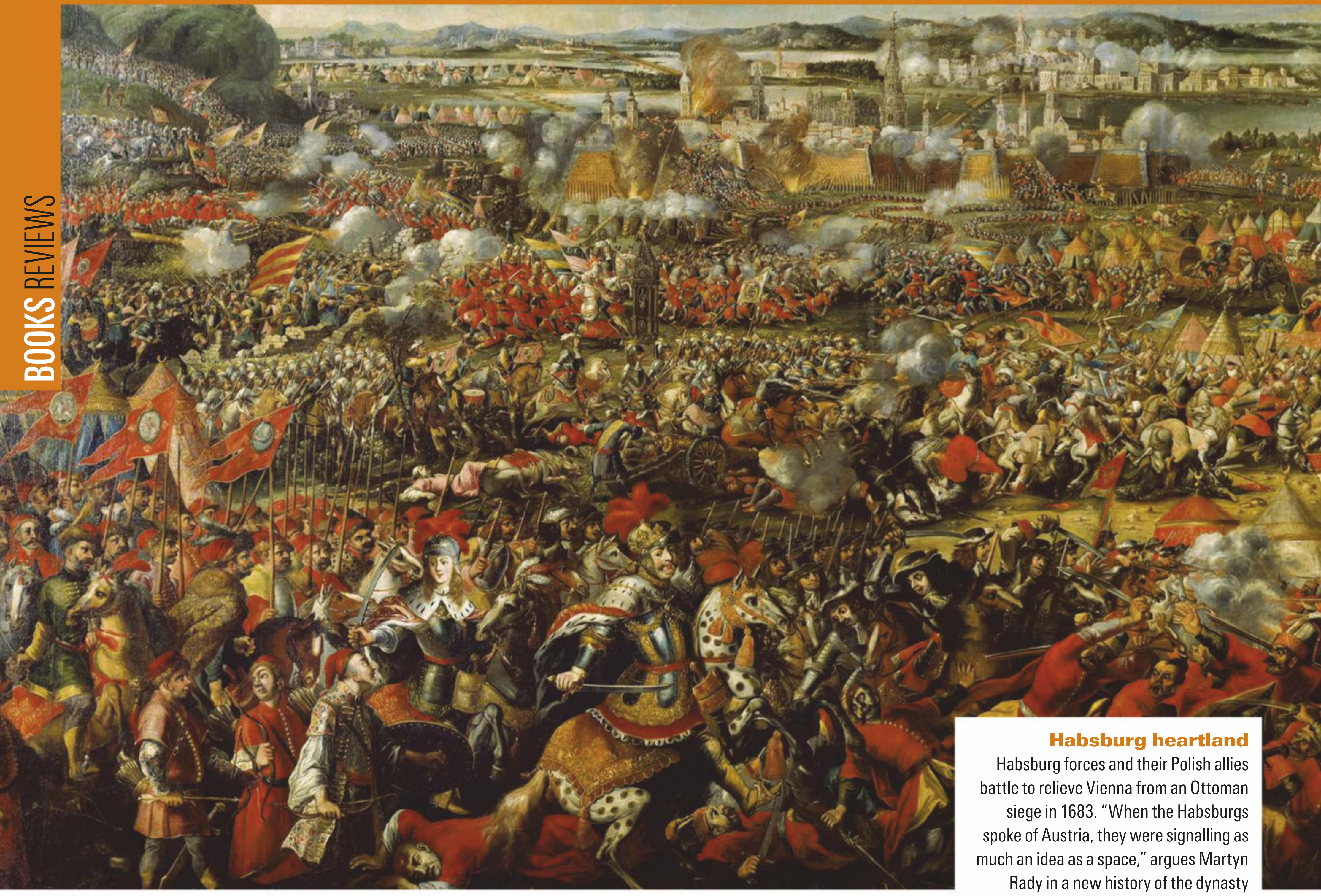
There is a wonderful story in the book from Ron Needle, a rear gunner, about his search for resolution. Needle lost five of his friends in a Lancaster crash. He suddenly realised that he needed to find out what happened to his men, and his journey of redemption is heart-warming and heartbreaking.

Both during the war and afterwards, a lot of criticism has been levelled at Bomber Command. How do veterans feel about that?

Almost to a man, they feel desperately hurt. They feel very let down that somebody would still say, 75 years on, that what they did was wrong.

There have been a number of myths that have grown up, and I think Dresden is one of the greatest of those. Dresden was horrific and you don't need to exaggerate what happened there to know that. But people say Dresden shouldn't have been attacked because the war was nearly over. Well, in February 1945, people did not know that the war was nearly over. We know it now, but they didn't know it then! The Germans were still launching V-2 rockets, killing thousands. A few months earlier, the battle of the Bulge had seen terrible defeats and setbacks. The Germans were still putting up huge resistance in various parts of Europe. When you're fighting a total war, you fight until the enemy surrenders.

These men lost friends, colleagues. And then, in the aftermath of the war, they were more or less abandoned by Churchill and other senior figures because of the destruction that had been wrought – destruction wrought under Churchill's direction, we should remember. Bomber Command didn't get a memorial until 2012, and a year ago that was splashed with paint. So the men feel hurt to know that people still question what they did. H

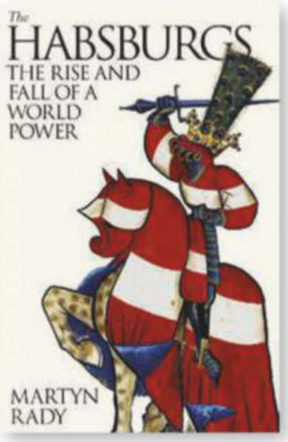


Habsburg heartland
Habsburg forces and their Polish allies battle to relieve Vienna from an Ottoman siege in 1683. "When the Habsburgs spoke of Austria, they were signalling as much an idea as a space," argues Martyn Rady in a new history of the dynasty

GLOBAL

Family fortunes

MARK CORNWALL recommends a masterful account of a dynasty that dominated Europe for more than four centuries and spread its influence across the globe



The Habsburgs: The Rise and Fall of a World Power
by Martyn Rady
Allen Lane, 416 pages, £30

Anyone visiting the Austrian city of Innsbruck should make sure to see the Court Church, built in the 16th century as a memorial to the Habsburg emperor Maximilian I. There we find his huge black marble tomb, decorated with illustrious scenes from his reign – not just military triumphs but dynastic marriages that extended Habsburg power across Europe. The cenotaph is surrounded by 28 bronze figures, larger than life and lined up to depict Habsburg ancestry. Some are understandable, such as Maximilian's father, Frederick III, whose bombastic motto was 'Austria is ruler of the world'. Others seem delusional, such as Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, or Arthur, legendary king of Britain.

The whole ensemble is a forceful reminder that, across five centuries, the Habsburgs were obsessed with crafting an image of their past and future greatness. They aspired to lead a range of 'world missions' in order to justify their existence and power. Yet there was always something deceptive about all this pomp and propaganda. If the bronze figures allude to it, so does the fact that Maximilian's tomb in Innsbruck is empty – his body is buried elsewhere, in a chapel near Vienna under a plain block of marble.

It is this steady clash between illusion and reality that Martyn Rady captures so well in his colourful new history of the Habsburgs. It is a formidable task to detail in one volume the story of a dynasty that dominated Europe for more than 400 years, which at its height could justifiably claim to have a global empire stretching from Brazil to the Philippines. But Rady has all the skills necessary to keep our attention. Not only is this a pacey romp

AKG IMAGES

with a keen eye for the gruesome, titillating and absurd, it's also grounded in immense scholarship. The author is proficient in multiple languages, meaning that we are treated to vivid anecdotes from Spanish, German and Hungarian sources as we speed through the decades.

Originating in the Swiss region of Aargau in the 10th century, the Habsburg family – possibly named after 'Hawk's Castle' – began to flourish as much through luck as through fecundity, owning about 30 castles by the 14th century. Key to this expansion was Rudolf of Habsburg, seven foot tall "with a nose long enough to obstruct traffic". By the end of his life in 1291 he was not only head of the Holy Roman Empire but, as a "rapacious man of war", had conquered Austria, effectively transferring the Habsburg heartland to central Europe.

Rady details how Rudolf's successors consciously built up this twin power base, as leaders of the empire and as archdukes of Austria. By forging historical charters and fabricating a Roman ancestry for themselves (for example, the notion that Julius Caesar had founded Vienna), the Habsburg myth was woven together: that theirs was a special family with a world mission. As Rady notes, "when the Habsburgs spoke of Austria, they were signalling as much an idea as a space". This was encapsulated in the long reign of Frederick III (he of the bombastic motto) in the 15th century. In Vienna, he built the tallest cathedral spire on the continent, and set a precedent as Holy Roman Emperor: a Habsburg would inhabit that key position for the next three centuries.

Yet all this was not just an elaborate mirage. In the 16th century, the Habsburgs really did become a "universal monarchy". Through the Spanish branch of the family, under Charles V and Philip II, they exploited the New World, soon dominating both the Atlantic and the Pacific. In central Europe they expanded their Austrian base into Bohemia, Hungary and Croatia. The imperial mission was now overlaid with a Catholic crusade, as their ships defeated the Turkish infidel in the Mediterranean and their Inquisition hunted down Jews in New Spain.

If the Austrian Habsburgs were less zealous than their Spanish cousins in the 16th century, by the next century the reverse was true. Ferdinand II became a manic persecutor of Protestantism, ensuring that the dynasty was fully identified with the Counter-Reformation. It culminated in 1683 in Leopold I's celebrated repulsion of the Turks from Vienna. Rady nicely reassesses Leopold's significance, but misses an opportunity to study in any depth the rich culture and sorry decline of the Spanish Habsburgs.

MAARTJE TER HORST/IAN FARRELL

A good third of the book is devoted to the 'modern era' when, after the Spanish line dried up, the Habsburg world shrank back to its central European roots. Under Maria Theresa and Joseph II in the 18th century, a fresh mission was invented: to reform and order the state to the benefit of its imperial subjects (and rulers). In the 19th century, Prince Metternich added the more rigid conservative purpose of defending Europe from revolutionary forces. Throughout these fast-moving decades, the Habsburg rulers struggled to adapt to new ideas and tended to favour stale bureaucratic control over any democratic experimentation. Yet they never lost sight of their grand imperial mission. For 40 years from 1815, their influence stretched far into Italy and Germany. In the 1860s, Archduke Maximilian was briefly emperor of Mexico, spurred on by his nostalgia for the lost era of the Spanish Habsburgs. Such instances of Habsburg overstretch failed. But elsewhere the commercial, cultural and geographical penetration continued under Franz Josef – witness the existence today of a Franz Josef Glacier in New Zealand.

> **"By forging charters and fabricating a Roman ancestry, the Habsburg myth was woven together: that theirs was a special family with a world mission"**

We now know, of course, that it was all to end abruptly with the empire's collapse in 1918. According to Rady, the "dynastic glue" was simply too weak and the Habsburgs' alliance with the kaiser's Germany proved fatal. Yet most significant, perhaps, was the failure of that modern Habsburg mission propagated since the days of Maria Theresa: that the dynasty would be even-handed in bringing all its citizens both prosperity and security.

Rady's final chapter, on the First World War, never quite explains this failure, and we lose sight of the Habsburg story amid details of the wartime turmoil. But that is merely a quibble. This is a real page-turner, capturing not just the Habsburgs' imaginative vision but hinting at the rich cultural legacy that they have left all around us. H

Mark Cornwall's new book, *Sarajevo 1914: Sparking the First World War* (Bloomsbury), is due to be published this autumn

AUTHORS ON THE PODCAST

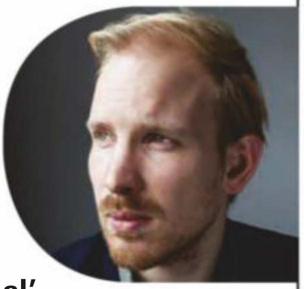
Dan Jackson on life in the north-east of England

"It was fundamentally a dangerous place for a long time. Northumbrians had to worry about armies appearing over the hill in a way that didn't apply to the rest of the country. As one historian describes it, the north-east was 'the ring in which the champions [Scotland and England] met'. There are no domestic medieval buildings left because they all burned down. There are plenty of castles though – Northumberland is the most fortified county in the British Isles."

Annie Gray on the trials of being Churchill's cook

"The Churchills were awful employers. Not only did they pay very badly, they were also very demanding, and got blacklisted by every employment agency in London after the war. But when people could stick them – like their cook Georgina – they got on very well indeed. Georgina knew what she was getting herself into and relished the challenge. She liked the fact that during the war she was right at the heart of things."

Rutger Bregman on humanity's innate kindness



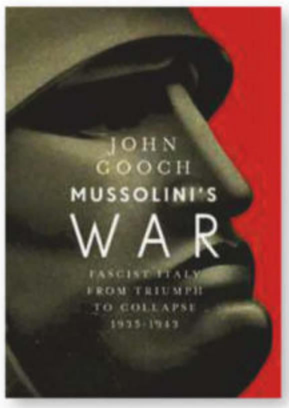
"We have to update our view of human nature in line with the latest science. We often equate realism with cynicism – when someone says 'be real' it means be a little more pessimistic. But, actually, I think it's really the cynics that are naïve. It's naïve to be cynical about human nature. Human beings aren't angels, but we are hardwired for connection and for cooperation."

MORE FROM US Listen to these episodes and more for free at **historyextra.com/podcast**

SECOND WORLD WAR

Under the shadow

DAVID LAVEN considers an important, but disappointing, new survey of Fascist Italy at war, from the invasion of Ethiopia to the alliance with Nazi Germany



Mussolini's War: Fascist Italy from Triumph to Collapse, 1935–1943
by John Gooch
Allen Lane, 576 pages, £30

The popular picture of Italian conduct in the Second World War is that of the decent Italian soldier: amorous, cultured, far from bellicose and eager to see the end of the conflict. This is the image presented in *Private Angelo*, the 1946 novel by Eric Linklater who was the official British historian of the war in Italy in its final years. It can also be found in Louis de Bernières's 1994 novel *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, and the charming 1991 Academy Award-winning film *Mediterraneo*.

The reality was very different. By the time Mussolini declared war in June 1940 after a period of 'non-belligerence', he had spent 20 years trying to convert Italians into a nation of aggressive warriors eager to turn the Mediterranean into an Italian *Mare Nostrum*.

In *Mussolini's War*, John Gooch builds on extensive archival research to offer a detailed – sometimes almost day-by-day – account of Fascist Italy's wars from the 1935 invasion of Ethiopia, through Italian involvement in the Spanish Civil War (pivotal to the victory of Franco's Nationalists) to fighting in alliance with Nazi Germany.

The story is by no means new, but Gooch tells it clearly and judiciously. His tale is one of disastrous rivalry between different branches of the Italian armed forces, between leading Fascists and career soldiers, between individual generals, and, perhaps above all, between Mussolini – the Duce – and his fellow dictator and ally, Hitler.

Italy was always lacking the resources to pursue the ambitions of its Fascist leadership. Leading military figures often found themselves caught between telling the truth to their impatient, bullying, and sometimes downright deluded Duce, and playing for time until bailed out by their German allies. Gooch has a masterful understanding of tactics and strategy, and handles these problems persuasively. Anyone interested in the Second World War should have this volume on their shelves.

But this is also a frustrating book. The voices of ordinary servicemen are entirely lacking. The novels of Giulio Bedeschi or Mario Rigoni Stern tell us much more about the experience of the Italians in the USSR than Gooch does. Meanwhile, scholars such as Davide Rodogno on Italians as occupiers, and Angelo Del Boca on Ethiopia, get to grips better with life on the ground, but they are virtually absent from the endnotes. Christopher Duggan, Paul Corner and Richard Bosworth have taught us much about how Italians engaged with the Fascist regime, but are completely absent from the bibliography, in which David Irving *does* feature.

> **By the time Mussolini declared war, he had spent 20 years trying to turn Italians into a nation of aggressive warriors**

From Gooch's perspective, women seemingly played no part in Mussolini's war, nor did the home front. If war is just the continuation of policy by other means, there is little sense here of why those policies were pursued: we never get a clear insight into the contested goals of Italian foreign policy.

Finally, even for the military history buff, the book disappoints. Gooch regularly tells us about the inadequacies of Italian materiel, but there is no systematic analysis of the quality of said Italian military hardware. I was fascinated, though, to learn quite how much jam was consumed during the Ethiopian campaign. H

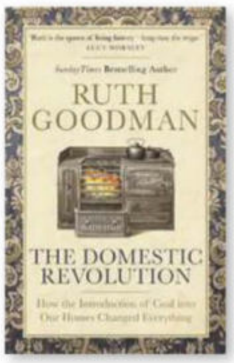
David Laven is associate professor of history at the University of Nottingham

Occupying forces
Italian troops march through Ethiopia in the 1930s. A new book on Fascist Italy struggles to get to grips with life on the ground in the Ethiopian campaign

ALAMY

SOCIAL

All fired up



The Domestic Revolution
by Ruth Goodman
Michael O'Mara, 320 pages, £20

Running from the 16th century through to the Victorian era, Ruth Goodman's new book turns an ostensibly dull slice of economic history into a human story that touches us all. It tackles a subject well covered by economic historians: the history of coal. But from her unique perspective as a living history practitioner with a career-long interest in the childcare, cooking and cleaning that preoccupied so many of our forebears, Goodman writes about it in a very different way.

From a raft of different sources, Goodman pieces together the history of domestic fuel, tracing the gradual switch from wood to coal from the 16th century onwards, and the many – often unexpected – consequences.

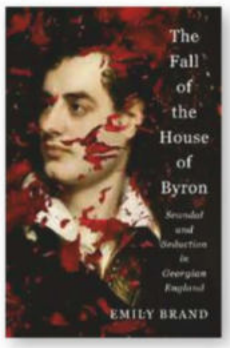
Britain's demand for fuel for heat and cooking was large and growing. It had traditionally been met by wood, but wood stocks were limited, whereas coal was relatively abundant. As a result, the nation's homes started making the switch, first in London, then elsewhere. Yet the substitution was not simple. Hearths and homes needed to be reconfigured to accommodate the indoor burning of the new smoky fuel. Coal fires, Goodman informs us, burn with more even heat, which in turn shaped elements of our national cuisine, especially the uptake of such familiar staples as boiling, puddings and roasting. And – never one to forget about the cleaning up – Goodman also shows how the introduction of this dirty fuel reshaped how we did the housework and laundry.

Serious historians might want more details, and lament the lack of footnotes, but Goodman's broad-brush approach is what makes the book so fascinating. In beautiful prose, she shows us the connections between our private homes and large historical trends, and invites us to reimagine the past.

Emma Griffin, author of *Bread Winner: An Intimate History of the Victorian Economy* (Yale)

GEORGIAN

Bad blood



The Fall of the House of Byron
by Emily Brand
John Murray, 368 pages, £25

The fact that this book's title alludes to Edgar Allan Poe's Gothic tale of madness and dynastic decay, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, is fitting. The 19th-century poet Lord Byron delighted in playing the role of the doomed but glamorous Gothic aristocrat, and in dropping dark hints about his family's heritage of wickedness, insanity and ruin.

Emily Brand's book sets out to sort fact from fiction, drawing upon a wealth of contemporary sources to reconstruct the disastrous history of the house of Byron, and tracing the lives of its members as they blundered, fought, seduced and squandered their way through 18th-century Europe.

Aristocratic families of the era tended to be enormous, and the Byrons were no exception. Brand briefly mentions dozens of Byrons, but wisely focuses her attention on four of the family's most colourful members. The scandalous love affairs of Isabella Byron, the murderous misanthropy of the infamous William Byron ('the wicked lord'), the almost unbelievable toughness of Vice-Admiral John Byron ('Foul-Weather Jack'), and the miserable and dissipated career of 'Mad' Jack Byron are all described here in novelistic detail, with a lightness of touch that belies the enormous amount of research that has clearly gone into every page.

In this retelling, the Byron family grow from the pantomime villains of legend into actual human beings, and whatever is lost in melodrama is more than made up for by the richness of the stories that Brand has brought to light. The cover promises "scandal and seduction", and there is plenty of both, along with war, cruelty, murder, madness, shipwreck, incest, adultery and much more besides. But the spectacular anecdotes are never allowed to upstage the human realities behind them, and the result is a superb family biography that should appeal to anyone with an interest in the social and cultural history of Georgian Britain.

Joseph Crawford, senior lecturer in English at the University of Exeter

FROM FACT TO FICTION

Royal pride

Ben Kane on his blood-spattered and battle-packed new medieval adventure story, *Lionheart*

Why did Richard the Lionheart capture your imagination?
I think I first became aware of Richard I from his dramatic appearance in the stunning novel *Knight Crusader* by Ronald Welch, a childhood favourite of mine. I did not then appreciate the full details of his intriguing life; that came many years later, when reading novels about his imprisonment on the way back from the Holy Land, and the latter part of his reign. But it was learning about his youth, and the incredible family feuding that took place then, that really made me want to write about him. Taken together, the strands of his life story screamed out to be brought together in the pages of a book.

What can you tell us about the bad blood between Richard and his royal relatives?
The saying "There's nowt as queer as folk" could not be more apposite for the house of Plantagenet in the late 12th century. Not for nothing did Henry II call his sons the 'devil's brood'. During the 1170s, Richard and his two elder brothers, Henry 'the Young King' and Geoffrey, joined their mother Queen Eleanor in rebellion against their father. Although peace was restored by 1174, Eleanor was to remain a prisoner of Henry's for almost 15 years. Relations between father and sons were also strained. By the early 1180s, the Young King and Geoffrey had rebelled against their father again. Richard remained loyal, but after the unexpected deaths of both his older brothers, fell out with his father, who would not name him as heir. This disagreement eventually led to war, a confrontation that saw Richard emerge victorious.

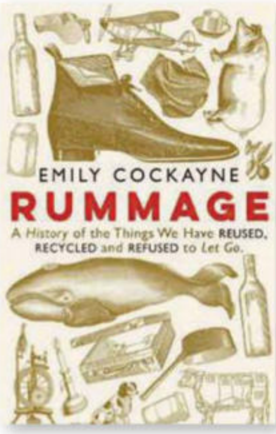
What sort of research goes into writing a historical novel like this?
Good research takes months, and involves reading dozens of textbooks, visits to as many historical locations as possible, and vast amounts of notetaking! It never ends either – currently, I have 10 open texts on my desk.

Lionheart
by Ben Kane
(Orion, 400 pages, £14.99)

SOCIAL

Lost and found

RICHARD SUGG delves into the murky depths of Britain's social history with a book that dredges up the hidden stories of everything we have chucked away over the last 500 years

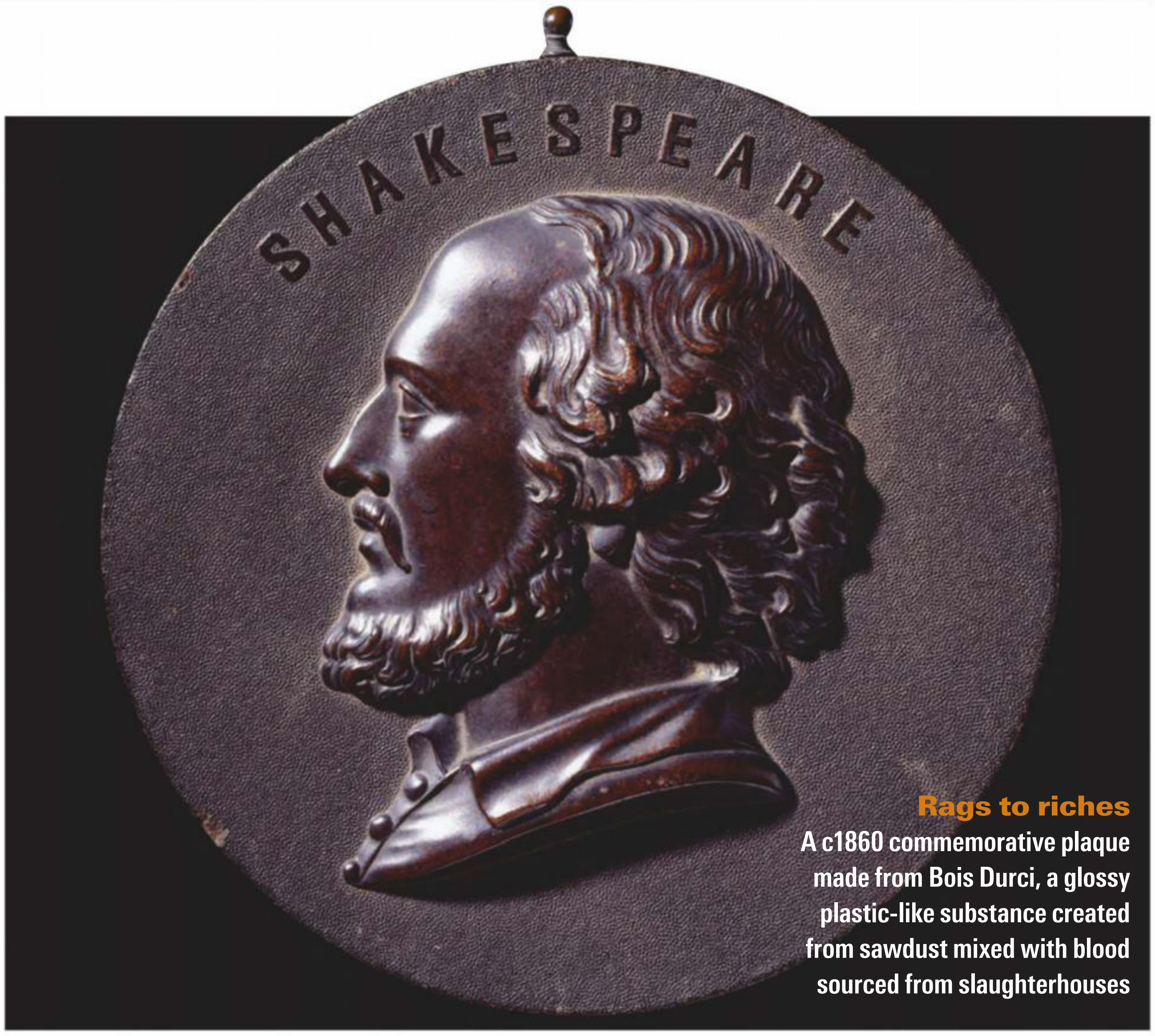


Rummage: A History of the Things We Have Reused, Recycled and Refused to Let Go
by Emily Cockayne
Profile, 400 pages, £16.99

Would you like to know the origins of the word 'shoddy', the phrases 'breeze blocks' and 'taking the piss', or the forgotten histories of the delicious neologisms 'bonzoline' and 'kamptulicon'? Or learn how to make an eco-house powered by its own toilet? Then *Rummage* is the book for you. Since 2007, Emily Cockayne has been publishing richly intriguing alternative histories. And the latest may be her best yet – a kind of alternative history of everything in Britain across the past 500 years.

The book employs an unusual, archaeological structure, beginning with surface layers of reuse and economy from the present day and living memory, before striking down through the hybrid soils of Britain during the world wars, the Victorians and Georgians, to the iconoclastic repurposing of church or monastic furniture in the Civil War and Reformation eras. As she digs, Cockayne continually brings buried treasures to light, turning them under our gaze to be seen from fascinatingly varied perspectives. She has a knack of offering not just vivid secret histories of waste, but also of the people involved in their collection and transformation. We meet, for example, the eccentric professional scavenger Henry Kirkman, found dead by police in 1836 surrounded by old newspapers, pockets stuffed with cash, his face slowly being recycled by rats.

Different readers will have different favourites among the book's densely packed chapters. The early discussions of wombles, scavenged ice-lolly sticks, deposit bottles and jumble sales are particularly nostalgic. Older readers (such as my uncle) will still have certificates for the railings they lost in the Second World War. Others may (though I doubt it) have inherited scarves made from dog wool, as certain pedigree breeders claimed to be doing during the First World War.



Rags to riches
A c1860 commemorative plaque made from Bois Durci, a glossy plastic-like substance created from sawdust mixed with blood sourced from slaughterhouses

My personal preference in this grimy Aladdin's cave is the 19th century. The Victorians, for many the embodiment of cultural inertia, are here remade as people caught up in a ceaseless river of change – the technological alchemy of filth into soap, horse dung into paper, bones into matches. Our period-drama impressions of Victorian domestic elegance, solidity and authenticity are radically undermined by buried histories of fake wood and cheap imitation. Pianos and even houses were shaped from papier maché. From 1855 *bois durci*, a compound of blood and sawdust, was magicked into innumerable polished 'wood carvings' or ornaments.

> **"The Victorians were caught up in a ceaseless river of change – the alchemy of filth into soap, horse dung into paper, bones into matches"**

The book is so densely packed that at times the prose itself becomes a little compressed. In the tale of Roundheads smashing up Winchester Cathedral with bones from its tombs, it would have been nice to have a few more words on the surrealist stained glass repairs now visible in the great west window. On the subject of bones, fears of soldiers' bones being ground into fertiliser were doubtless largely based on myth – but some reference to Ruth Richardson's findings on soap and candles made from corpses would round out the picture. Yet the book is so ingeniously suggestive that it leaves one wanting more. If good history means that the past will never look quite the same again, then *Rummage* is a very fine work indeed. H

Richard Sugg is currently completing his next book, *Talking Dirty: The History of Disgust from Jesus Christ to Donald Trump*

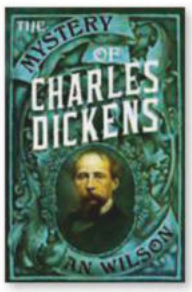
GETTY IMAGES

ALSO ON THE BOOKSHELF

WORDS BY **ELLIE CAWTHORNE** AND **MATT ELTON**

BIOGRAPHY

The Mystery of Charles Dickens
by AN Wilson
(Atlantic, 368 pages, £17.99)



Dickens on his deathbed

In June 1870, part way through penning *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, the 58-year-old Charles Dickens died. AN Wilson's new biography begins back to front, taking the author's final moments as a jumping off point to explore some of the biggest 'mysteries' of his life, from his difficult childhood and failed marriage to his mesmeric public persona and the dizzying success of his novels.

VISUAL

The World Aflame: The Long War, 1914–1945
by Dan Jones and Marina Amaral
(Head of Zeus, 448 pages, £25)

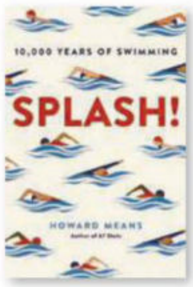
Dan Jones & Marina Amaral
The World Aflame
The Long War, 1914–1945

Life in colour

"Breathing life into the past" is how artist Marina Amaral describes her work colourising black and white photographs. Here, her images are used to tell the story of a world convulsed by war, vividly documenting the years 1914–45 in a way that makes the past feel within touching distance. Dan Jones provides the text, offering the historical background to some of the 20th century's most striking photographs.

SOCIAL

Splash! 10,000 Years of Swimming
by Howard Means
(Allen & Unwin, 336 pages, £16.99)

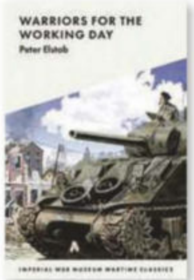


Ripples across time

From stick figures paddling across ancient Egyptian cave paintings to astounding Olympic feats in shimmering manmade pools, humans have long enjoyed taking a dip. Howard Means' history of swimming is full of charming surprises – look out for censor-shocking itsy-bitsy bikinis, Channel-crossing shenanigans and swimming lessons courtesy of Benjamin Franklin.

FICTION

Warriors for the Working Day
by Peter Elstob
(Imperial War Museum, 317 pages, £8.99)

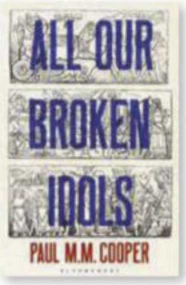


Driving force

The latest classic novel about the Second World War to be republished by the Imperial War Museum is Peter Elstob's 1960 story following the progress of a British tank crew from training in Aldershot, through the battle of Normandy to the 1945 invasion of Germany. As discussed in a new introduction, Elstob drew on his own wartime experiences as a tank commander in the Royal Tank Regiment for inspiration.

FICTION

All Our Broken Idols
by Paul MM Cooper
(Bloomsbury, 368 pages, £14.99)

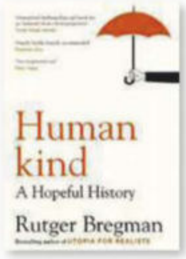


The past inside the present

In ancient Assyria, Aurya and her brother find themselves bound for the imposing city of Nineveh. In present-day Iraq, archaeologist Katya Macaulay's discovery of a beautiful carving leads her into grave danger. With its two female protagonists separated by more than 2,500 years of history, and its narrative strobing back and forth between them, this novel is ambitious, atmospheric stuff.

SOCIAL

Humankind: A Hopeful History
by Rutger Bregman
(Bloomsbury, 496 pages, £20)



The power of good

"This book is about a radical idea that most people are pretty decent," historian and author Rutger Bregman notes in his follow-up to 2017's *Utopia for Realists*. Ranging through time and drawing on science to debunk the idea of humans as selfish and cynical, he offers a spirited take on where that idea came from – and a charismatic defence of the importance of believing in our universal capacity for kindness.

CULTURAL

Blooming Flowers: A Seasonal History of Plants and People
by Kasia Boddy
(Yale, 256 pages, £14.99)

Blooming Flowers
KASIA BODDY

Floral history

Human history has long been garlanded with flowers, nearly every significant moment – birth, death, joy, despair – having associations with a particular plant. This beautifully produced book delves into the cultural significance of 16 examples, from daffodils and daisies to lilies and lotuses. Festooned with images, and drawing on case studies as diverse as the suffrage movement and *Sex and the City*, this is a treat.

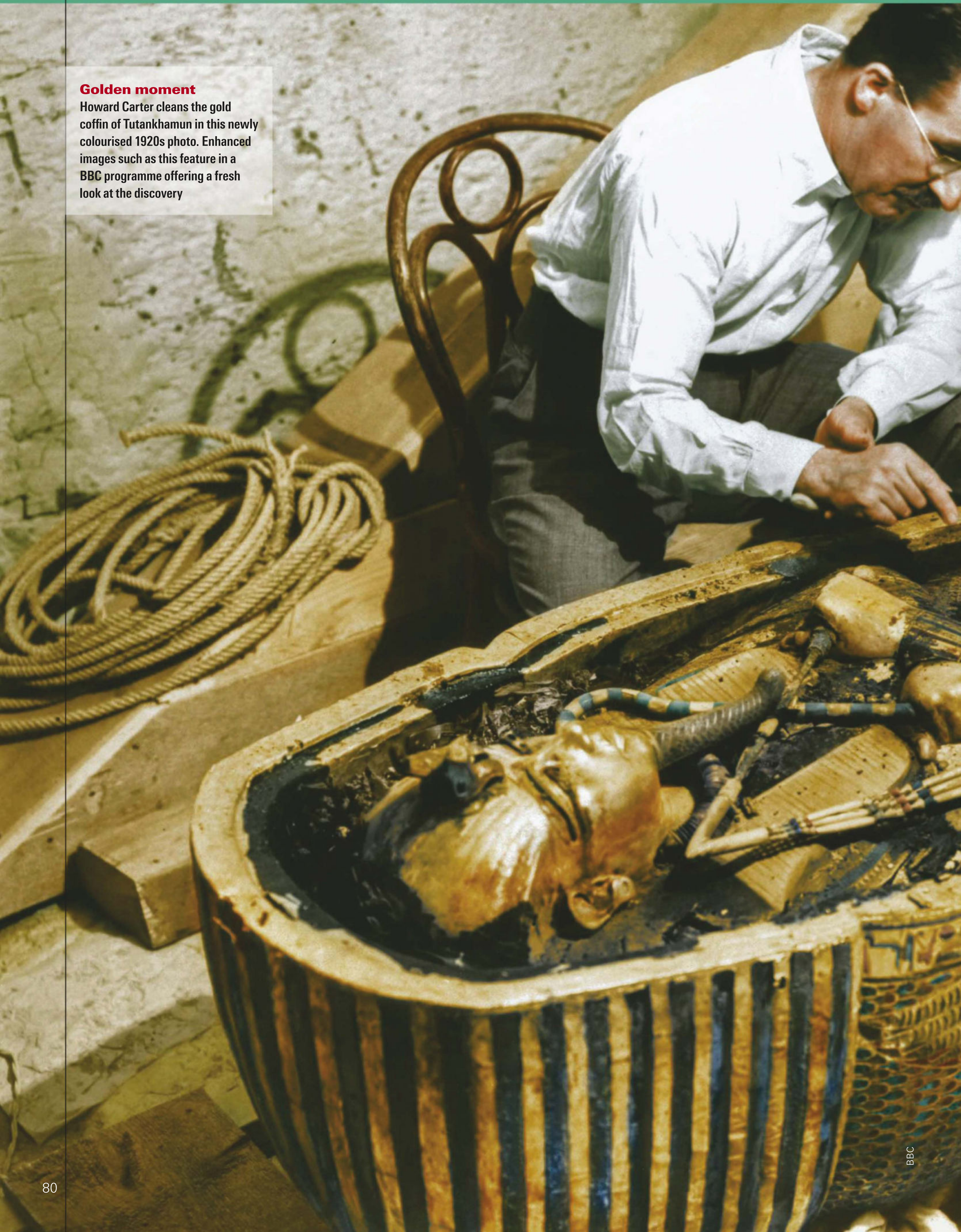
WWII

Love in the Blitz
by Eileen Alexander
(William Collins, 496 pages, £20)

EILEEN ALEXANDER
LOVE IN THE BLITZ

Love and war

There's always something refreshing about viewing military episodes through the eyes of non-combatants, and this collection of personal correspondence offers an intimate perspective on the Second World War. Saved thanks to a spontaneous purchase on an online auction site, the compelling letters that Eileen Alexander wrote to her young sweetheart are reproduced along with insightful footnotes.



Golden moment
Howard Carter cleans the gold coffin of Tutankhamun in this newly colourised 1920s photo. Enhanced images such as this feature in a BBC programme offering a fresh look at the discovery

BBC

ENCOUNTERS

80 DIARY: LISTEN / WATCH / TASTE
By **Jonathan Wright**, **Matt Elton** and **Sam Nott**
85 RECOMMENDED History films

WATCH

Discovery of the century

Colourisation used to be viewed with suspicion, widely associated with attempts to make classic black-and-white movies more palatable for TV audiences. Yet with the increasing sophistication of digital techniques, such as those employed in Peter Jackson's First World War film *They Shall Not Grow Old*, it now genuinely offers us the chance to see the past through fresh eyes.

The latest example of colourisation takes us back to a discovery from November 1922 so magnificent that it still transfixes us today: British archaeologist Howard Carter's pinpointing of the last resting place of boy pharaoh Tutankhamun (c1342–c1325 BC).

In a new BBC Four documentary, eminent Oxford University Egyptologist Elizabeth Frood acts as our guide to what we see. Because so many photos from the dig were taken using high-quality glass-plate negatives, the colourised images often reveal unexpected details. Most dramatically of all, the images enable us to witness the tomb being revealed as Carter and his compatriots would have done.

On 16 February 1923, Carter and his backer, Lord Carnarvon, broke through into Tutankhamun's burial chamber. The scene that greeted them was fantastical. A blue and gilt shrine filled the room, and, as the documentary follows the gradual unveiling of Tutankhamun's mummified remains from within a lavish sarcophagus, this was only the first of the wonders that the team encountered.

Tutankhamun in Colour
BBC Four / Due to air in June

Samira Ahmed visits the Jameh Mosque of Yazd during her exploration of Persia's incredible cultural heritage

BBC/GETTY IMAGES

WATCH

Reclaiming the past

The Islamic Revolution has skewed the western world's view of the deeper history of Iran. So argues Samira Ahmed as she sets out to tell the story of a place once better known as Persia, a name that conjures up mystery and beauty.

A new BBC Four series serves as a reminder that the Persians once ruled lands that extended as far as Egypt and northern India. The story of the empire's ancient kings was almost forgotten in subsequent years as invaders brought a new language and a new religion, but Persia's culture has proved remarkably resilient.

Telling the story of Persia, Ahmed travels to labyrinthine bazaars; to a temple at which a holy fire has burned for more than 1,000 years; and to Persepolis, once the seat of Persia's ancient kings.

The Art of Persia

BBC Four / Due to air in mid-June

LISTEN

Modernist masterpiece

From PG Wodehouse's comedies to the experimentation of Virginia Woolf, the books of the 1920s have much to tell us about different aspects of the jazz age. That's the central idea behind Radio 4's 'Electric Decade' strand, which offers new adaptations of books from the period.

If many of the texts featured are familiar to UK listeners, that's not the case with *Cane*. Written by Jean Toomer, a poet and novelist associated with the Harlem Renaissance, it was initially published in 1923. It's arguably the first work of African-American Modernist Literature, structured as a series of vignettes – which doesn't mean that it's any less a searing portrait of racism in the US South.

Electric Decade: Cane

BBC Radio 4 / Due to air Sunday 21 June

Jean Toomer, pictured with his wife – writer and activist Margery Latimer – is among the novelists whose works are being freshly adapted in a new Radio 4 season

WATCH

Sailing into the past

Sadly, it's probably going to be difficult to travel this summer, but there may be at least some solace in making tentative plans for next year. A new series from Bettany Hughes might offer some inspiration: it follows the classicist and historian on an odyssey to explore Greece's islands.

And *Odyssey* really is the right word here, because these are travels inspired by the journey of Odysseus back from the Trojan War, from modern-day Turkey to his home island of Ithaca.

In the first of six episodes, Hughes heads for the eastern Mediterranean near Fourni, where marine archaeologist George Koutsouflakis takes her to the site of a remarkable discovery: 58 shipwrecks that date back 2,500 years. It's a reminder that travel by sea was fraught with danger in the ancient Mediterranean.

Also in the first episode, Hughes gets a warm welcome on the island of Chios. This is the cue for a look at a theme that's been a recurring interest for her in recent years: ancient attitudes to hospitality and welcoming travellers, an idea encompassed in the Greek word *philoxenia* or 'love of strangers'.

On Lesbos, Hughes sees a theatre that proved an inspiration to the Romans. On Samos, she explores the tunnel of Eupalinos, an aqueduct built, appropriately enough considering the island was once home to Pythagoras, with the help of mathematical engineering and geometry.

A Greek Odyssey with Bettany Hughes

Channel 5 / Due to air Friday 12 June

Bettany Hughes heads to the Greek islands in a trip inspired by Homer's epic *The Odyssey* – perfect escapist fare during lockdown

SANDSTONE GLOBAL PRODUCTIONS/GETTY IMAGES

Demonstrators gather in Tehran in March 1953. The role that Britain played in Iran's political tumult during this period is examined in a TV documentary

WATCH

Secret state

In August 1953, in a covert operation orchestrated by the US Central Intelligence Agency and Britain's MI6, Mohammad Mosaddegh was ousted as democratically elected prime minister of Iran. Across the subsequent years until the 1979 revolution, the last shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, became an increasingly authoritarian figure.

Did Britain's young monarch, Elizabeth II, play a role in this coup d'état without her knowledge? That's the contention of a documentary based on the investigative work of security historians Richard Aldrich and Rory Cormac, authors of *The Black Door: Spies, Secret Intelligence and British Prime Ministers.* Drawing on rarely seen archives, the duo also argue that, for more than 65 years, the true story of what happened has been covered up.

The Queen and the Coup

Channel 4 / Due to air Sunday 21 June

WEEKLY TV & RADIO

Visit *historyextra.com* for weekly updates on upcoming TV and radio programmes

A comfort food in Russia and Ukraine, sweet sochniki are redolent of cheesecake

TASTE

Sochniki

Compared variously to both scones and cheesecake, the origins of these soft, cheese-filled pastries can be traced back to the dough made by the ancient Rus' people of what is now Ukraine and Russia. Fast-forward to the 20th century, and they were often served in school canteens in the Soviet Union. If you've not encountered them before, they're worth a try: sweet, tasty and bulging with filling.

Difficulty: 3/10 **Time:** 1 hr 30 mins

INGREDIENTS

For the dough:
300g plain flour
100g unsalted butter
One large egg
4 tbsps plain yoghurt or sour cream
4 tbsps sugar
1 tsp baking powder
A pinch of salt

For the filling:
300g cottage cheese
2 tbsps sour cream
One egg white
3 tbsps sugar
1 tbsp cornstarch
A pinch of salt
A pinch of vanilla seeds
Egg yolk and 2 tbsps water, for egg wash

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). Make the dough by sifting the flour, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Chop the butter into pieces and work it into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.

In a separate bowl, whisk an egg with sugar and sour cream, and then combine it with the flour mixture. Knead the dough, form it and place in the fridge for at least half an hour.

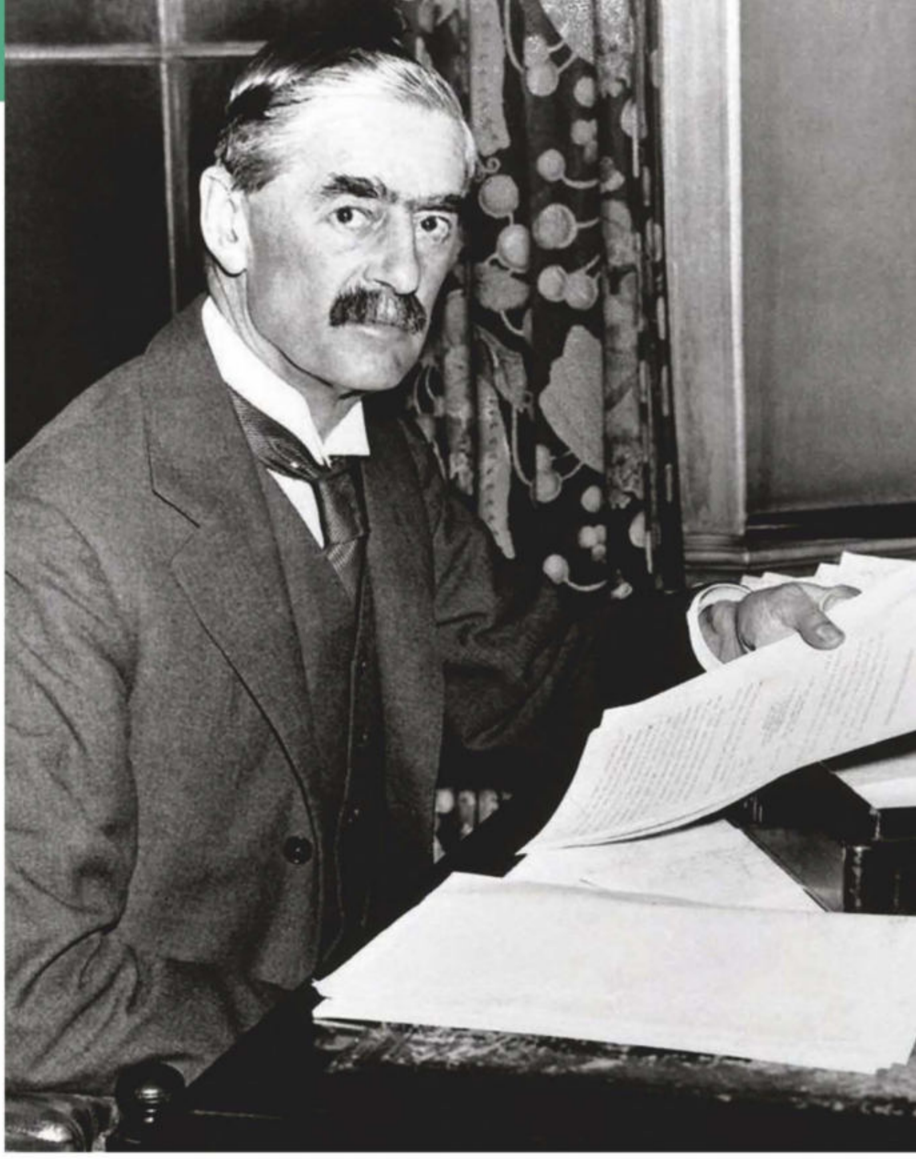
Meanwhile prepare your filling. Mix the cottage cheese, sour cream, egg white, sugar, salt, vanilla seeds and cornstarch. The cottage cheese should be smooth and silky.

When the dough is cool enough, roll it into a layer about 5mm thick on a floured surface. Using a circular cutter about 10cm in diameter, cut the dough into about 15 circles. Add a generous tablespoon of filling on half of each circle and fold over from the other side. Don't pinch the edges; the stuffing should be just visible.

Brush the pastries with an egg wash made from whisked egg yolk and a little water. Place on a baking tray and bake for 25 minutes, until the sochniki are golden brown.

The key is to eat the sochniki when they are cold: wait until they cool down completely and enjoy with a cup of tea or glass of milk.

Recipe from Russia Beyond (rbth.com)



Neville Chamberlain in 1932. A new documentary explores how critics of the former prime minister wrote a book that reshaped British politics

LISTEN

The blame game

The urge to find someone to blame when things go wrong runs deep in our political culture, yet just how useful is it to point the finger? At a time when argument rages over the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, a new documentary from producer Phil Tinline looks back 80 years to see what a controversy in a previous era can teach us.

In July 1940, the polemical bestseller *Guilty Men* was published, a scathing attack on the political class of the Baldwin-Chamberlain era and the idea of appeasement. Credited to 'Cato', it was the work of three journalists, including future Labour leader Michael Foot, who wrote the text in no more than four days.

The book, argues Tinline, changed British politics forever – and yet it's a problematical text. Not only did it contain glaring inaccuracies, but Foot, for example, had initially opposed rearmament in the 1930s.

Touching on *Guilty Men: Brexit Edition* (2017) – a broadside by 'Cato the Younger' against those the anonymous author thought had paved the way for Britain's vote to leave the European Union – Tinline considers if the blame game can contribute to ensuring mistakes aren't repeated. Or could it, he asks, simply be a way of pinning some of the responsibility for our own mistakes on others?

Guilty Men
BBC Radio 4 / Due to air Monday 29 June

SAMANTHA NOTT/GETTY IMAGES

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE RECOMMENDS

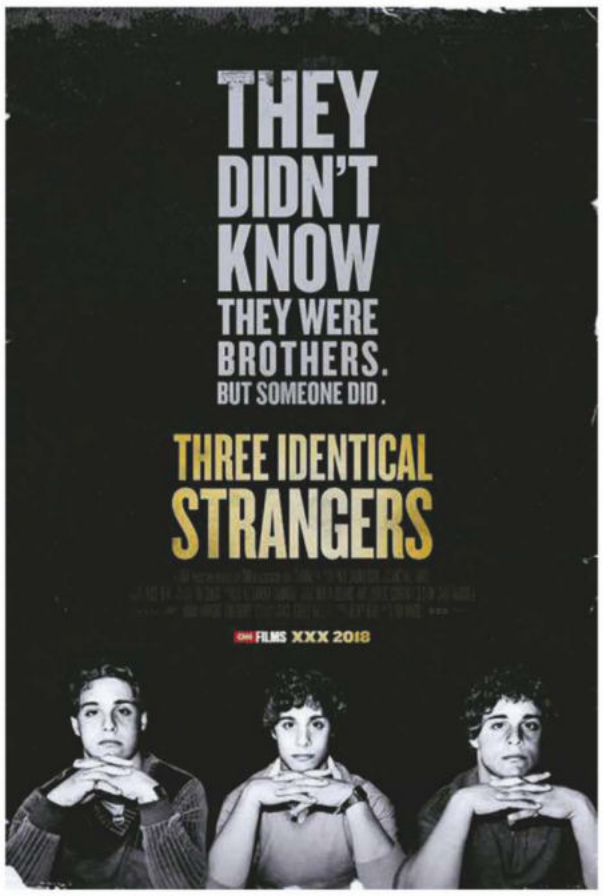
History films to watch at home

Our series exploring the best historical entertainment to enjoy, without leaving the house, continues with some of our favourite dramas and documentaries. All are available to stream via online providers

Elizabeth

Amazon Prime, Google Play, YouTube

My chief take-away from Shekhar Kapur's reimagining of a young woman's ascent from marginalised princess to Virgin Queen, was that England's 'golden age' was anything but inevitable. Perils assail Elizabeth (Cate Blanchett, pictured above) at every turn: the hapless Mary I (Kathy Burke) is deliberating whether to send her sister to the block; and the sinister Duke of Norfolk (Christopher Eccleston) is plotting her assassination. But, perhaps most dangerous of all, there's Elizabeth's own heart: at the film's core is her relationship with the dashing Robert Dudley (Joseph Fiennes). In the end, though, Dudley is cast aside as Elizabeth concludes she would prefer to be wedded to the nation. The lovelorn girl is replaced by the inscrutable Tudor superstar. Gloriana is born. **Spencer Mizen** *Production editor*



The remarkable story of three brothers separated at birth is told in *Three Identical Strangers*

ALAMY

Dunkirk

Amazon Prime, Google Play, Netflix*, YouTube

Depicting one of the most nail-biting operations of the Second World War – the evacuation of British troops from the French coast as Hitler's forces closed in – *Dunkirk* adeptly avoids tired war-movie tropes. In his signature space-and-time-bending style, director Christopher Nolan slices up the evacuation into three interweaving timelines: land, air and sea. The result is a nerve-shredding exercise into how much tension can be built in 106 minutes. With stripped back dialogue, breathtaking cinematography and an inescapably ominous score, it's a must-see for fans of Sam Mendes' *1917*. **Ellie Cawthorne** *Section editor*

The Young Victoria

Amazon Prime, Google Play, Netflix*, YouTube

When we think of Queen Victoria, the image that often comes to mind is a dumpy old widow draped in black. But, as this drama reminds us, Victoria was just 19 at her coronation in 1837. Written by the king of period drama, Julian Fellowes, *The Young Victoria* follows the headstrong queen as she struggles to assert her own identity as those around her vie for control. Emily Blunt puts in a forthright performance as Victoria, with a supporting cast including Jim Broadbent, Paul Bettany and Rupert Friend (as a somewhat unrealistically dishy Albert). **EC**

Three Identical Strangers

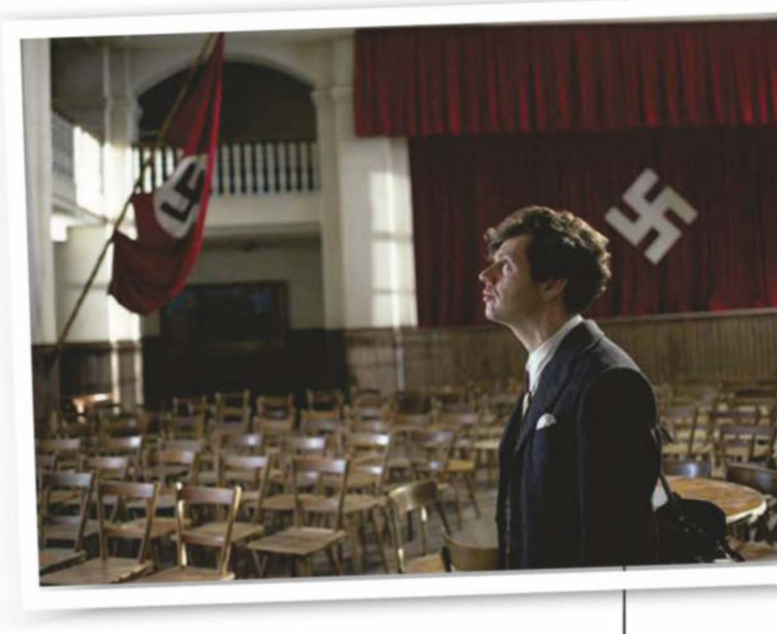
All4 (free), Amazon Prime, Google Play, Netflix*, YouTube

Nineteen-year-old Robert Shafran arrived at college in New York in 1980 to a weirdly over-familiar reaction. The reason soon became apparent: unbeknown to him, he had an identical twin brother who had attended the previous year. That wasn't the end of the story, with another brother soon getting in touch. *That* wasn't the end of the story, either – and, as coincidence congeals into something more sinister, this documentary delves into 20th-century America's darker recesses. **Matt Elton** *World history editor*

13 Minutes

Amazon Prime, Google Play, YouTube

Georg Elser's story is one that deserves to be told. Concerned by the outbreak of war, the carpenter from southern Germany planned to assassinate Hitler in November 1939. His bomb missed its target by just 13 minutes. Director Oliver Hirschbiegel (*Downfall*) follows Elser from 1930s small-town Germany during the rise of the Nazis to the harrowing interrogations after his arrest. Gripping performances and attention to detail, including regional accents, make this one of the decade's best World War II films. **Susanne Frank** *Art editor*



Christian Friedel stars in *13 Minutes*, which dramatises a failed attempt to kill Hitler in 1939

12 Years a Slave

Amazon Prime*, Google Play, Netflix*, YouTube

Based on the 1853 memoir of Solomon Northup, *12 Years a Slave* tells the story of a free African-American man from upstate New York who was kidnapped and sold into slavery in Louisiana. Released in 2013 to critical acclaim – including three Academy Awards – Steve McQueen's film presents an unflinching account of the brutality of slavery. It's not an easy watch – when I saw it at the cinema, I remember the audience leaving the theatre in virtual silence – but it's a hugely important piece of historical filmmaking. **Rob Attar** *Editor*

---

* Film included free with subscription at the time of writing

it's a gentlemen's watch
WAGSTAFF

Time for the **country.**

WAGSTAFF WATCHES

At Wagstaff watches we make no nonsense precision timepieces for those who love the country.

A family business from Yorkshire producing watches in a fine tradition at sensible prices.

Wagstaff watches are proud to support country traditions and skills and a percentage of every sale goes to support country pursuits, skills apprenticeships and helps to keep the countryside thriving.

£95

www.wagstaffwatches.co.uk

FREE SHIPPING

wagstaffwatches wagstaff_watches wagstaffwatches

The New York Times
Friday 20th October 2017

recycle

The Possibilities are Endless

Recycle your magazine and seven days later it could come back as your newspaper

www.recyclenow.com

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

TO ADVERTISE HERE CONTACT ANTONY ON 0117 300 8543 OR ANTONY.JAGO@IMMEDIATE.CO.UK

ADVERTISEMENT

For more ideas to help plan your historic day out check out the Directory at

www.historyextra.com/directory

PRIZE CROSSWORD

Across

1 The '____Raj', a dynasty of 'white rajahs' that ruled Sarawak, Borneo between 1841 and 1946 (6)

4 One of the two countries in the federation that replaced Yugoslavia in 2003, later becoming a separate nation (6)

7 First name of world-famous 20th-century US singer, sometimes referred to as the First Lady of Song (4)

8 The sacred mountain of ancient Greece that towers above Delphi (9)

10 National hero of Albania, following his rebellion against the Turks in the mid-15th century (10)

11 William ____, English Quaker leader and founder, in 1681, of an American 'Commonwealth' state (4)

12 ____Bates, US journalist and civil rights activist, known mostly for her role in the integration of public schools in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957 (5)

14 City of north-west Germany, which, at one point, was the largest British military base outside the UK (9)

17 Wife of Julius Caesar, who, forewarned, supposedly begged him not to attend the Senate on the day of his assassination (9)

18 The charging of an exorbitant rate of interest; in old English law it applied to the charging of any interest at all (5)

20 Spanish river that formed the dividing line between the Roman and Carthaginian occupations in third century BC (4)

22 Dorset location of a chalk figure cut into the hillside, possibly a 17th-century prank (5,5)

24 Amphitheatre begun during the reign of Emperor Vespasian (9)

25 ____Benedict, a 20th-century American anthropologist, the first woman to be recognised as a prominent leader in that profession (4)

26 Bergen-____, the Nazi concentration camp liberated by the Allies in April 1945 (6)

27 Polish commander, a staunch anti-communist, who became a leader of the Poles in exile after the Second World War (6)

Down

1 Indecisive battle of the Crimean War, inspiration for Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade* (9)

2 ____ap Gruffydd, king of Gwynedd, north Wales, until his death in 1170 (5)

3 German astronomer (1571–1630), noted for formulating and verifying the laws of planetary motion (6)

4 The opening up of foreign trade following the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing turned this city into a major international port (8)

5 The 'mother of the civil rights movement', best known for her pivotal role in the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955/56 (4,5)

6 Nineteenth-century Norwegian playwright, a pioneer of modern realistic drama (5)

9 The Reign of Terror during the French Revolution effectively ended with the execution of this prominent leader (11)

13 One of the three great Athenian tragic playwrights, best known for *Oedipus Rex* (9)

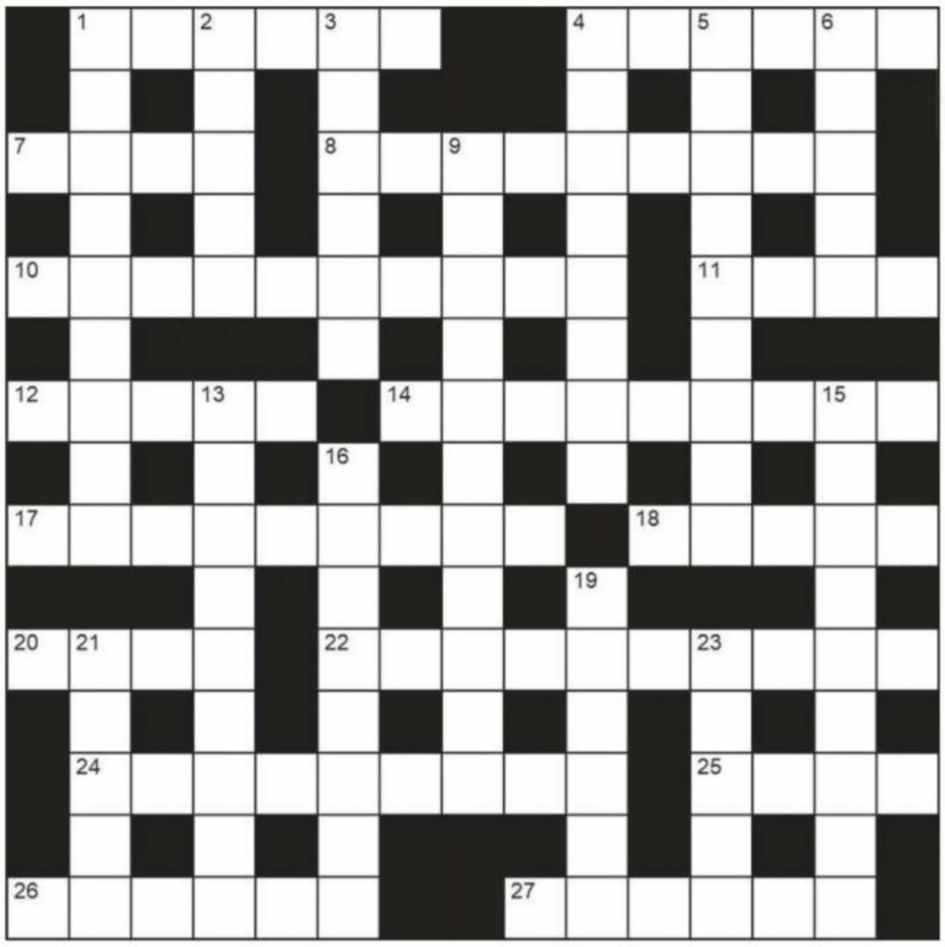
15 Spanish author (1547–1616) of one of the world's great novels, probably conceived while he was in prison (9)

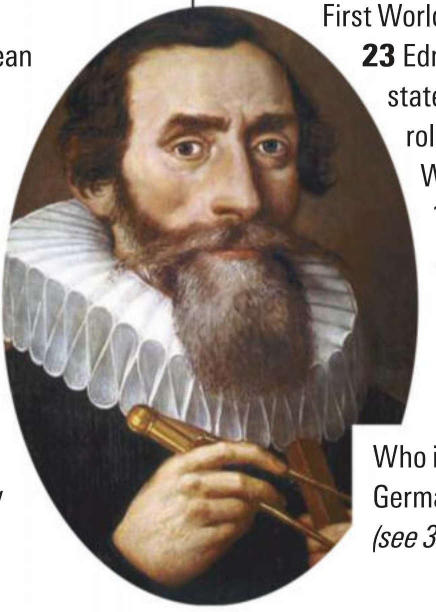
16 Lars Magnus ____, 19th-century Swedish inventor and founder of a telephone company that later developed into a multinational corporation (8)

19 A medieval landholder, often a guard or attendant of a noble family (6)

21 Derogatory term, derived from the French for a German soldier, used by the Allies in the First World War (5)

23 Edmund ____, British statesman who played a key role in the impeachment of Warren Hastings in the late 18th century (5)





Who is this German astronomer? *(see 3 down)*

Compiled by **Eddie James**

GETTY IMAGES

Dan Jones & Marina Amaral
The World Aflame
The Long War, 1914–1945

Book worth £25 for **4** winners

The World Aflame

The Long War 1914–1945

By Dan Jones and Marina Amaral

This new book uses 200 newly colourised photographs to bring to life the story of a world convulsed by conflict. Spanning four decades of tumult, from the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand to the dropping of the atomic bomb, it combines images colourised by artist Marina Amaral with text from popular historian Dan Jones.

HOW TO ENTER

● Open to residents of the UK (inc Channel Islands). Post entries to ***BBC History Magazine*, July 2020 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to ***july2020@historycomps.co.uk*** by 5pm on **8 July 2020**. ● Entrants must supply full name, address and phone number. The winners will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. Winners' names will appear in the September 2020 issue. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in full in the box below. Immediate Media Company Ltd (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will use personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy at *immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy/privacy/* ● Immediate Media Company Ltd (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) would love to send you newsletters, together with special offers and other promotions. If you would not like to receive these, please write 'NO INFO' on your entry. ● Branded BBC titles are licensed from or published jointly with BBC Studios (the commercial arm of the BBC). Please tick here ☐ if you'd like to receive regular newsletters, special offers and promotions from BBC Studios by email. Your information will be handled in accordance with the BBC Studios privacy policy: *bbcstudios.com/privacy. – bbc.com/editorialguidelines/guidance/code-of-conduct*

Solution to our May 2020 crossword

Across 5 Meitner 7 Sherman 10 Alison Weir 11 SOS 12 Hoffa 14 Agrippina 17 Meir 18 Eliot 19 Otho 20 Blue book 21 Gnome 23/1 New Deal 25 Tradescant 27 Perseus 28 Strauss

Down 2 Jenny 3 Chartists 4 Walsingham 6 Task force 8 Ras 9 Genghis Khan 13 Overlander 15 Phoenicia 16 Segontium 22 Celts 24 WHS 26 Nash

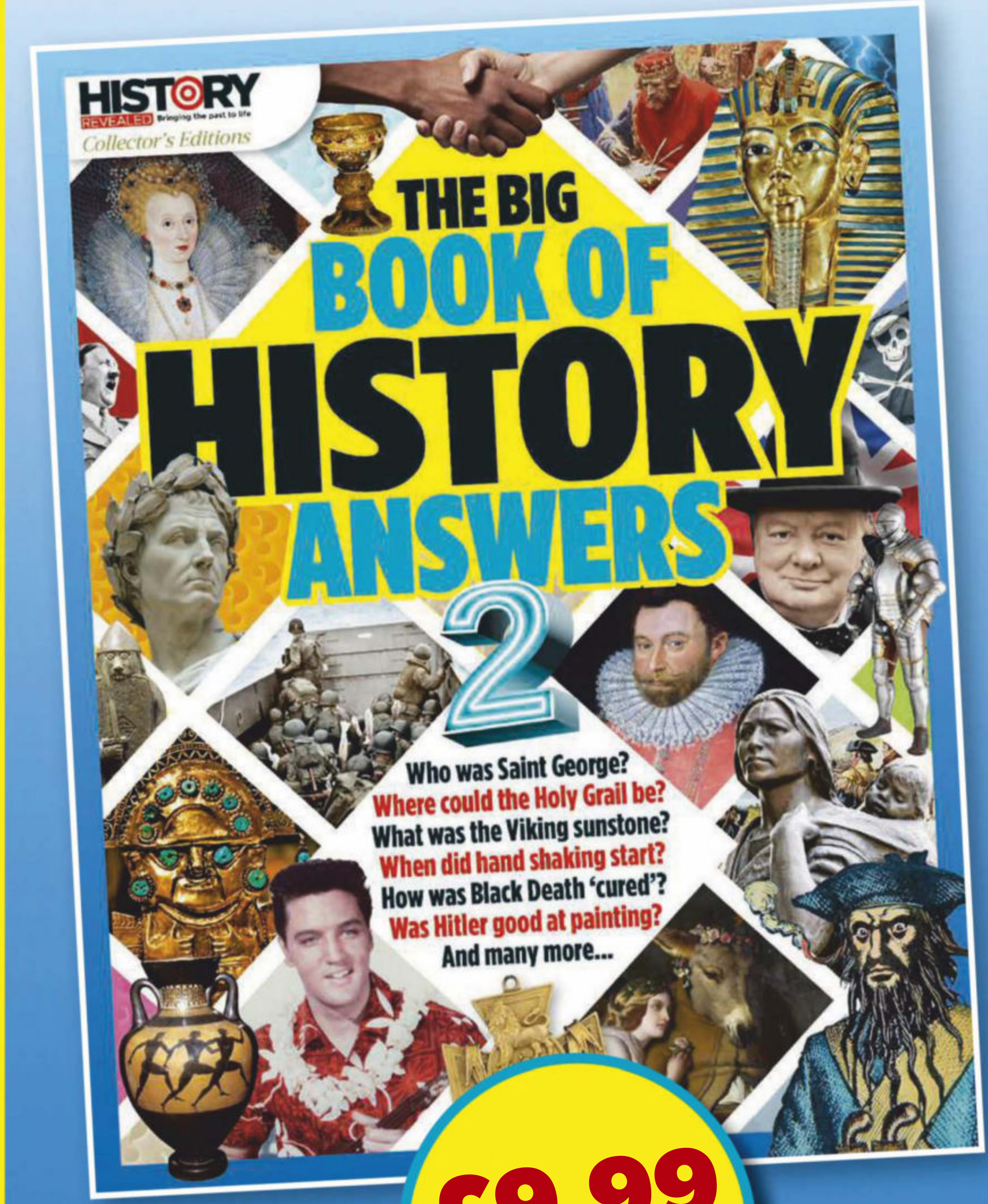
Six winners of *The Crew* by David Price

A Smith, Essex; S Pegum, Barnet; H Holmes, West Yorkshire; W Phillips, Norfolk; C Brown, Leicestershire; A Devitt, North Yorkshire

CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

● The crossword competition is open to all residents of the UK (inc Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering, participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry permitted per person. ● The closing date and time is as shown under How to Enter, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will not publish your personal details or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at *immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy policy/* ● The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 20 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner up. ● Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions, or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. The promotion is subject to the laws of England.

From the makers of BBC HISTORY REVEALED


HISTORY REVEALED Bringing the past to life
Collector's Editions
THE BIG BOOK OF HISTORY ANSWERS 2
Who was Saint George?
Where could the Holy Grail be?
What was the Viking sunstone?
When did hand shaking start?
How was Black Death 'cured'?
Was Hitler good at painting?
And many more...

THE BIG BOOK OF HISTORY ANSWERS 2

What is the earliest-known photograph?
Was tarring and feathering fatal?
How big was Henry VIII's codpiece?
The answers to these questions, plus many more, can be found in the pages of this special Q&A compendium from the makers of *BBC History Revealed*

INSIDE YOU WILL FIND

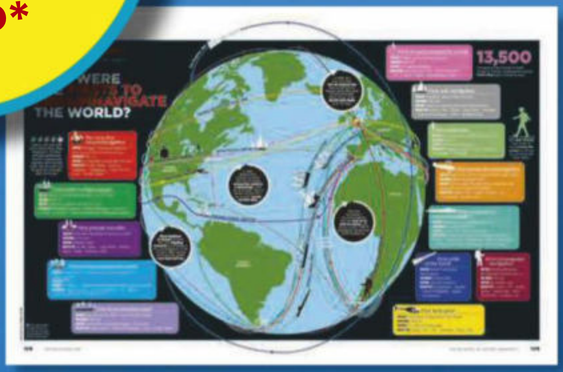
- Hundreds of questions answered by our panel of brainiacs
- Rare historical photographs and images of artefacts
- Fun facts, titbits and curios from history

PLUS subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK postage on this special edition!

£9.99 INC FREE P&P*

THE ANCIENT WORLD
HOW MANY ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE DIED FROM THE CURSE OF TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB?
COULD WOMEN IN ANCIENT ROME HOLD ANY POWER?

ALL HISTORY – Ten chapters jam-packed with Q&As, spanning ancient to modern times



ROUND THE WORLD – infographics go into greater detail, including the history of circumnavigations

TOP 10
WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST BLUNDERS EVER MADE?
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

TOP TENS – Biggest blunders, luckiest people and not forgetting famous bears (to name a few)

ORDER ONLINE

www.buysubscriptions.com/Answers20

OR CALL US ON **03330 162 138**† QUOTE CODE **HISTORY ANSWERS 2020 PRINT 1**

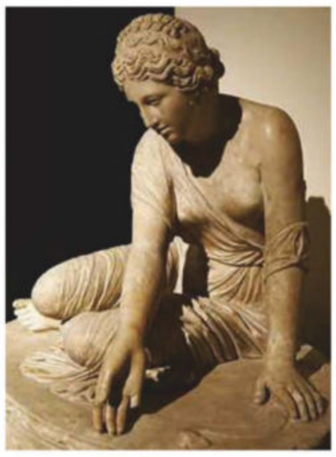
†UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 8am – 6pm and Sat 9am – 1pm.
* Subscribers to *BBC History Magazine* receive FREE UK POSTAGE on this special edition. Prices including postage are: £11.49 for all non-subscribers, £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for the Rest of World.
All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.

MORE FROM US

A selection of the exciting content on our website **historyextra.com**

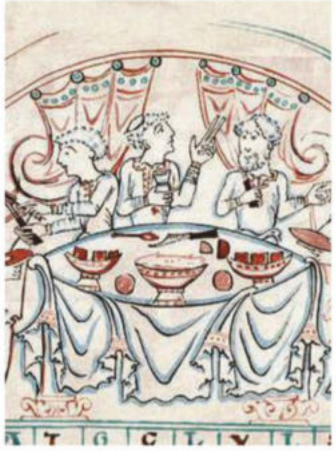
History questions for your home pub quiz

As many of us stay connected with family and friends through quizzes from our homes, we've created a selection of history questions perfect for your next trivia round. You can mix and match to create your own history pub quiz, and don't miss our list of royal questions, too. ***historyextra.com/history-questions***



All you need to know about Roman Britain

How long were the Romans in Britain? How did they make their mark? And why did they leave? As part of our 'Everything you need to know' podcast series, we were joined by Miles Russell to find out more about this historical period. ***historyextra.com/total-roman-britain***



When did medieval people eat?

In the Middle Ages, who you were and what you did for a living had great bearing on what you were allowed to eat – and when. Here, Professor Chris Woolgar explores medieval mealtimes, as well as the popularity of snacking. ***historyextra.com/medieval-meals***

Why do brides wear white dresses?

Did you know that brides haven't always worn white dresses? In this article, historian Emily Brand explores the origins of this tradition as well as the history behind three other notable wedding customs. ***historyextra.com/weddings-history***

GETTY/ALAMY/BRIDGEMAN

NEXT MONTH

August issue on sale 9 July 2020

Medieval families at war

Robert Bartlett reveals the secrets to creating a successful royal dynasty during the Middle Ages

The monstrous Nero

Shushma Malik considers why the Roman emperor became so despised

A peasants' revolt?

David Andress challenges conventional thinking about the origins of the French Revolution

Buried treasures

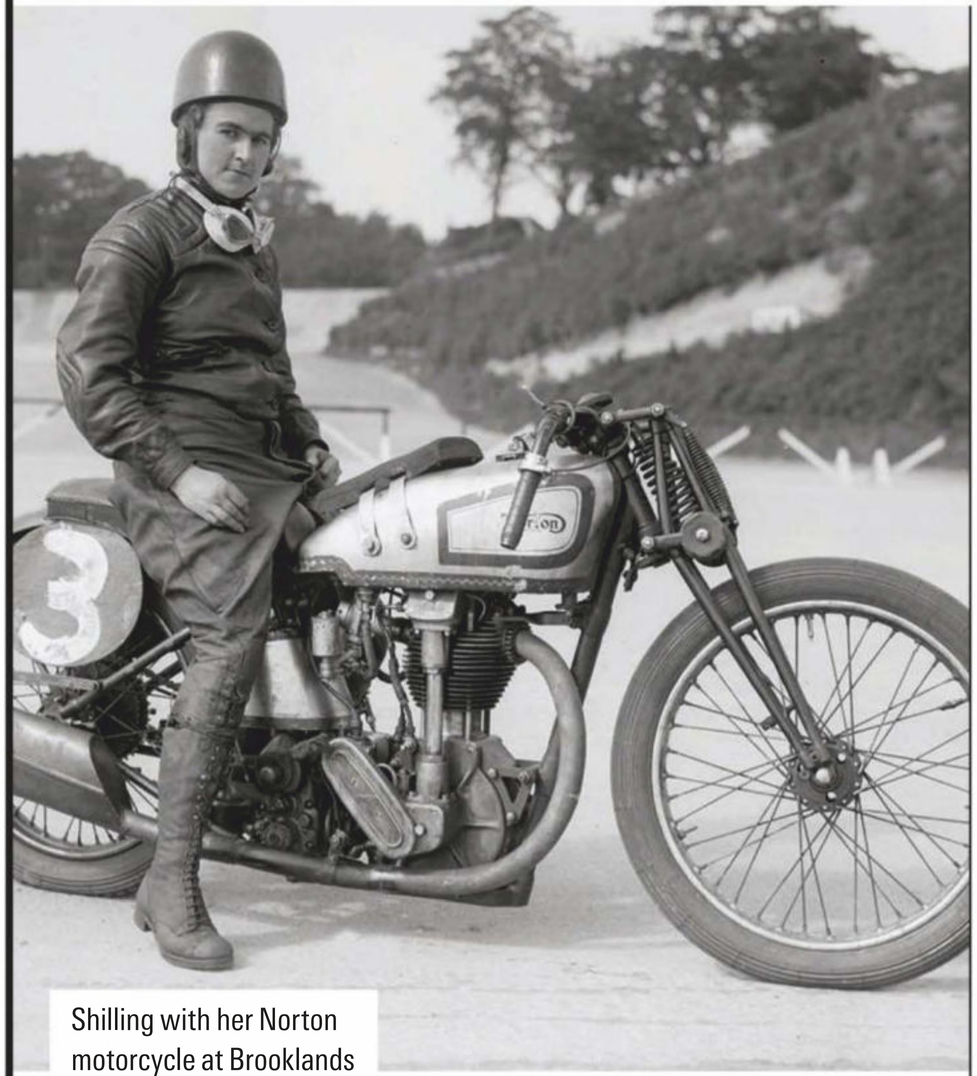
Michael Lewis on some of the greatest archaeological discoveries of recent times

Cathy Newman, *journalist and broadcaster, chooses*

Beatrice Shilling

1909–90

Cathy Newman is an award-winning investigative journalist, Channel 4 News presenter and author of *Bloody Brilliant Women* (2018). She will also present a weekly show on Times Radio, set to launch later this summer



Shilling with her Norton motorcycle at Brooklands racetrack in Surrey, 1935. Her fascination with motorbikes offered valuable informal training for an engineering career

IN PROFILE

Beatrice Shilling was born in March 1909 in the small Hampshire village of Waterlooville. She bought her first motorbike at the age of 14, and was obsessed with them throughout her life. Shilling trained as an engineer – something that was incredibly difficult for women to do at the time – and secured a job as a technical officer at the Royal Air Establishment at Farnborough in the 1930s. She was awarded an OBE in 1947 for her pioneering work on the engines of fighter planes in the Second World War.

> // Shilling helped change the course of history: we might not have won the Battle of Britain if it wasn't for her invention //

When did you first hear about Beatrice Shilling?

It was when my husband was helping me research my book, *Bloody Brilliant Women*. He found a biography of Shilling, and I became fascinated with her life and how history has remembered her. For example, the device for which she is best known – the disc with the hole [which stopped the engines of fighter planes cutting out] – was nicknamed 'Shilling's orifice'. She helped win the Battle of Britain, but was reduced to a gag about her vagina.

What kind of person was Shilling?

She became an engineer at a time when it was, as her biographer put it, "easier for a woman to think of a career in lion taming". She was definitely an 'English eccentric': while other young girls were pressing flowers, she was in her overalls taking motorbikes apart.

Shilling later joined the British Motorcycling Racing Club and became one of the first women to complete a circuit at 100 miles an hour. She was always a motorbike fanatic, and trained herself to become an engineer by taking apart motorcycles in her back garden.

What was her finest hour?

When the Battle of Britain started in July 1940, it soon became clear that there was a serious problem: the Luftwaffe's planes had fuel-injected engines, and the RAF's didn't. This meant that whenever a British pilot in, for example, a Spitfire went into a dive to shake off an enemy plane, the engine would splutter and sometimes cut out entirely because of the effects of negative G-force.

Shilling and her team worked 19-hour shifts trying to recreate the conditions in which these cut-outs might occur. After a year, she discovered a way to regulate the flow of fuel into the engine's float chambers using a metal disc with a hole in it. Shilling fitted these to aircraft herself, riding between airfields on her Norton motorbike. The solution fixed the flaw that was causing pilots to die.

She helped change the course of history: we might not have won the Battle of Britain if it wasn't for Beatrice Shilling.

If you could meet Shilling, what would you ask her?

I suspect that she would have some shrewd advice for my daughters about how to make it in the world. And she might teach me how to ride a motorbike!

Can you see any parallels between her life and your own?

I would never have considered a career in engineering. My parents were both scientists, but I was better at English and music. One of my first journalism jobs was with the *Financial Times*, so I had to become very numerate, very quickly. I enjoyed the challenge, but can't see myself as a Beatrice Shilling character. H

Cathy Newman was talking to Rachel Dinning

MORE FROM US

Cathy Newman talks about Shilling and other **inspirational 20th-century women** on our podcast: *historyextra.com/cathynewman-podcast*

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
PHILATELISTS
STANLEY GIBBONS LTD
LONDON

STANLEY GIBBONS

THE HOME OF STAMP COLLECTING

POSTAGE
Q ONE PENNY I
Q ONE PENNY J
Q ONE PENNY K
Q ONE PENNY L
R ONE PENNY I
R ONE PENNY J
R ONE PENNY K
R ONE PENNY L

The world's first adhesive postage stamp was born from frustration with an inefficient postal system. Until 1837, sending a letter was an expensive and complicated task. Like any other transaction, payment was received at the end but this meant it was the recipient who was left to settle the bill.

Rowland Hill, a schoolmaster, was so moved by the inefficiency of the process that he took it upon himself to revolutionise communication forever. Hill published a pamphlet, Post office reform; Its importance and practicability, in which he made a case for a big change. He argued that the new system should require a cheap, flat-rate which would be prepaid when posted.

After months of lobbying, Hill's idea took shape in the world's first postage stamp.

Design

POSTAGE
T ONE PENNY A
1 PRICE 1d Per L

The very process of designing the Penny Black is a fascinating area of collecting. It began with an open competition inviting designers and engravers to envision an image that would prevent forgery and reuse. Around 2,600 entries were received but only four ideas from Treasury Competition Essays of 1839 were chosen and its designers were awarded £100 each.

While elements from the winning designs were incorporated into the final portrait of Queen Victoria, Rowland Hill ultimately based the winning design on a medal engraving created by William Wyon of the monarch when she was only 15-years-old.

The image was printed by Perkins Bacon in sheets of 240 stamps with that required scissors to be cut from the sheet. The stamps featured a white-line machine engraved background and a simple crown watermark for forgery prevention. The image was used on all stamps for the entirety of her reign.

To see our full range of Penny Blacks visit www.stanleygibbons.com/PennyBlack

STANLEY GIBBONS | 399 Strand | London | WC2R 0LX
www.stanleygibbons.com

@StanleyGibbons /StanleyGibbonsGroup @StanleyGibbons